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ABSTRACT

This handbook provides Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Earth Service Corps club leaders and advisors with ideas for structuring clubs and service-learning projects. Activities and suggestions help to plan out the year, and improve service projects and club meetings. Contents include: (1) "What is YMCA Earth Service Corps?"; (2) "The Four Program Components"; (3) "A Recipe for Starting Your Own Earth Service Corps Club"; (4) "The Earth Service Corps Partnership"; (5) "Club Development"; (6) "Introduction to Weekly Club Outlines"; (7) "Fundraising"; (8) "Service Learning"; (9) "Leadership Development"; (10) "Environmental Education"; (11) "Planning Service-Learning Projects"; (12) "Community/Environmental Resource Mapping"; (13) "Cross-Cultural Awareness"; (14) "Evaluating Your Club"; and (15) "Evaluating This Handbook." An appendix includes a YMCA parent information sheet. (CCM)

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YMCA EARTH SERVICE CORPS

CLUB HANDBOOK

YMCA Earth Service Corps

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YMCA EARTH SERVICE CORPS

CLUB HANDBOOK

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How To Use This Handbook

This handbook was created to help YMCA Earth Service Corps club leaders and advisors with ideas and resources for structuring your club and service-learning projects. The activities and suggestions you'll find in this handbook come from the experiences of many different clubs.

Think of this handbook as a map to help you plan out your year and, improve your service projects and club meetings. It is intended to be flexible and adaptable. Use what works for you. Experiment with new ideas. Evaluate your progress. And, give us feedback. Share your stories, successes and learning. Contact the National Resource Center in Seattle at **1-800-733-YESC** with your comments and suggestions.

Some of the best resources you gain will come from experience, meeting other young people and club advisors, and working with YMCA staff. Call your local YMCA and YMCA staff person to get additional help and information. There are also six YMCA Earth Service Corps Regional Resource Centers located around the country to help you. Contact the center closest to you for more information.

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What is YMCA Earth Service Corps?

Earth Service Corps is a YMCA, teen and community partnership program that supports the development of youth-led clubs and provides: environmental education opportunities, leadership training, service-learning, international/cross-cultural experiences, and exposure to a multitude of ways to take effective action.

Program Objectives

- **To encourage young people to examine all sides of environmental issues** by looking at scientific aspects of the environment and the way history, culture, society, economics, and politics impact the way decisions are made;
- **To help young people learn and practice leadership skills** by fostering open mindedness, cooperative action, problem solving, and community building;
- **To help young people explore attitudes of different cultures toward the environment** by bringing together a diverse group of people to exchange ideas and participate in joint projects;
- **To advance education through action** by empowering young people to initiate and carry out constructive environmental projects so that they learn by doing;
- **To promote broad understanding and appreciation of diversity** by exposing young people to a variety of cultural experiences and environmental perspectives;
- **To expose young people to career opportunities** in science, social services, and the environmental field through action projects, community partnerships and networks;
- **To stimulate expansion of YESC locally, nationally, and internationally** by creating quality program models and developing a national network of support and shared information.

Mission Statement

To empower students to become effective, responsible global citizens by providing opportunities for environmental education and action, leadership development, and international/cross-cultural exchange.

A History of YMCA Earth Service Corps

Environmental Education and the YMCA

Early in its evolution (1883 to be exact), the YMCA created camping programs that taught young people about the natural environment and other life skills. Using the camp setting, the staff focused on building self-esteem and mutual respect. YMCA Earth Service Corps follows in this tradition by teaching young people caring, respect, honesty, and responsibility through community action and better understanding the place in which they live.

The early years in Seattle

Earth Service Corps was created by the Seattle Metrocenter YMCA in 1989 as a way to involve young people in the environment and community leadership. The first official Earth Service Corps event was an environmental symposium at the University of Washington on November 8th. Two hundred and seventy teens from 13 Seattle-area high schools attended. Soon, clubs began to spring up all over the city.

For the first student-organized Earth Day celebration, Seattle teens planted 16,000 seedlings and at the same time hosted 18 students from YMCAs in Thailand, Japan, and India for a two and a half week exchange. Students raised more than $14,000 in an Adopt a Tree fundraiser to support these events.

In 1991, the Seattle YMCA received a grant from the Kellogg Foundation to broaden the range of the program. Since that time, YMCA Earth Service Corps spread to YMCAs all over the United States.

Our understanding of "environment" has grown with our understanding of the world around us. To respond to the call to act locally, we are focusing on the issues that make our neighborhoods more livable and sustainable. Many clubs run recycling programs, assist with planting and maintaining trees along streets and in parks, plant urban gardens, create environmental street murals, and monitor water quality.

The growth of the program has been explosive but as we've grown we've remained true to our mission by keeping our understanding of "community" inclusive, our commitment to youth leadership development true, and our focus on action.

The Four Program Components of YMCA Earth Service Corps

❶ Leadership Development: Rising to the Occasion

Earth Service Corps is fundamentally about providing opportunities for young people to be leaders in their communities. We believe that every young person has talents and skills to offer. With support, encouragement, and training opportunities teens are a source of creativity, energy, and natural leadership. Leadership is developed in Earth Service Corps through the club experience, leadership weekends, and the organizing of service-learning projects.

❷ Environmental Education: Exploring Where We Live

Earth Service Corps is learning about the place where we live, to which we are committed, and that nurtures us and needs our care. We learn about our environment through various activities. Environmental symposia are more formal settings where we learn about different sides of an issue, discuss them rationally, and try to achieve some possible solutions to real-world problems through simulations. Through outdoor adventure trips and field trips we learn directly about the beauty of the natural world, and we develop a better appreciation of the care and respect it deserves. Through resource mapping and other club activities, we learn more about our immediate communities and what we can do to enhance them.

❸ Service-Learning Projects: Learning by Doing

In Earth Service Corps, we apply what we've learned as leaders and what we've learned about the environment by carrying out service projects. For any given project, a teen will develop their leadership skills by identifying, planning, and carrying out these projects from beginning to end. Each teen will learn more about the particular environmental issues facing their community through resource mapping. As we learn about our community, we can actually learn from our projects by evaluating and reflecting upon their impact.

❹ Cross-Cultural Awareness: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

One of the best lessons one can learn from the study of the environment is how important diversity is to success. We need different approaches to deal with different issues as they arrive. And, regardless of where we live, to be leaders we need to understand those we hope to inspire. Environmental problems do not recognize international or cultural boundaries. In Earth Service Corps, we truly model the idea of "thinking globally, acting locally."

A Recipe for Starting Your Own Earth Service Corps Club

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 teacher or other adult who would like to be your club's advisor
- A handful of friends and peers who are concerned about their community environment
- 1 YMCA staff person to assist you in starting up your club, having fun, and implementing needed service projects
- Endless amounts of enthusiasm

MIXING DIRECTIONS:

For the best results, begin by:

- Publicizing your first meeting! Invite other interested teens.
- Holding a first meeting that is fun, informational, and exciting.
- Deciding on a first project to kick off the year that everyone can be involved with, can be done in one day and leaves a real sense of accomplishment.
- Celebrating your project! Share your successes!
- Keep planning and recruiting!
- Remember, people like DOING things, not just talking about doing things. So keep your club focused and active.
- Have fun and be patient - it can take time to really get the ball rolling.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has," Margaret Mead.

The Earth Service Corps Partnership

Earth Service Corps brings together young people and adults to work together to make a difference in our communities. At the heart of this partnership is the understanding that every partner has unique skills and talents. This next section outlines the key roles and responsibilities of each partner. Use this information to help you shape a strong club and network of support.

WANTED: YOUTH LEADERS

Young people wanted to provide club and city-wide leadership for Earth Service Corps.

Responsibilities:

- ✓ Choose, plan, undertake, and evaluate environmental action projects
- ✓ Recruit other teens
- ✓ HAVE FUN with outdoor adventure trips, field trips, and more!!

Qualifications:

- ✓ Compassion, energy, commitment, and maturity
- ✓ Between the ages of 11-19

How to Get Involved:

Join an Earth Service Corps Club near you. Attend meetings to help plan productive projects that will make your community a better place to live. Suggest new ideas for things you and YOUR friends can do to learn more about the environment, possible jobs related to the environment, and your community. GET OUTSIDE and figure out what's so wonderful about the great outdoors.

Hours:

About one hour a week for club meetings plus additional hours as required for environmental service-learning projects, evaluation, and reflection.

Contact:

A YMCA near you or the YESC National Resource Center (800) 733-YESC.

WANTED: CLUB ADVISORS

Advisors needed to work with a group of Earth Service Corps teen leaders

Responsibilities:

- ✓ Work with YMCA staff to provide leadership to club
- ✓ Act as a community and environmental resource for service-learning projects
- ✓ Encourage learning and support student action
- ✓ Participate *with* students
- ✓ Attend club meetings
- ✓ Help students reflect and evaluate their service and club experiences

Qualifications:

- ✓ Commitment to teens and the development of their individual leadership styles and skills
- ✓ Interest in the environment and community outreach
- ✓ Desire to work with young people

Hours:

Typically one hour a week for club meetings. Some participation in after school projects may be necessary.

Benefits:

Access to YMCA training, resources, staff and programs for you and your classroom. Being part of training young people to care for their community in a dynamic, positive fashion. Developing understanding of service-learning.

For more information, contact:

A YMCA near you or the YESC National Resource Center at (800) 733-YESC

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WANTED: YMCA STAFF

Talented and committed YMCA staff are needed to provide overall leadership and coordination to YMCA Earth Service Corps program

Responsibilities:

- ✓ Provide overall program coordination including a program calendar which offers activities that reflect the four core program components
- ✓ Coordinate teen leadership trainings, volunteer-advisor trainings, and cross-cultural opportunities
- ✓ Assist with reaching out to the community
- ✓ Attend club meetings to support club efforts
- ✓ Ensure that both teens and advisors are having a rewarding and positive experience
- ✓ Help advisors and teens evaluate and reflect on their service experiences

Qualifications:

- ✓ Commitment to teens and the development of their individual leadership styles and skills
- ✓ Interest in the environment and community outreach
- ✓ Recommended YMCA Certification in:
  - Working w/15-18 or w/10-14, and
  - Earth Service Corps Director

Hours:

Approximately two to three hours a week with each club.
This time includes prep time in organizing the meeting, working with club advisor and students, attending the club meeting, and participating in a service project. Additional hours may be needed for area-wide project coordination, leadership trainings, and other event planning.

Benefits:

Bridge to your community and area schools. Training young people to care for their community in a dynamic, positive fashion.

For more information, contact:

YESC National Resource Center at (800) 733-YESC

Club Development

You have the opportunity as the club advisor or teen leader to help each club member reach their potential AND to help the club function well as a group. This section has been designed to help you run effective club meetings, recruit members, define a leadership structure for your group, and help all of you have more fun and get more accomplished.

What does a YMCA Earth Service Corps club look like?

An Earth Service Corps club can be started anywhere. Most of our clubs have been organized in high schools, but new clubs have started in community centers, churches, and government housing projects. There are three key elements that every club should have:

❶ Interested Young People
❷ An Adult Advisor
❸ YMCA Involvement and Support

Key Elements of a Successful Club

We've found that strong Earth Service Corps clubs tend to have the following characteristics:

- ⇒ The club meets regularly (no less than twice a month);
- ⇒ The location and time of the meeting is clear to all of the members and stays consistent;
- ⇒ There is an adult advisor who is a consistent member of the group and who is supportive of teen leadership;
- ⇒ YMCA staff offer support, resources, and leadership;
- ⇒ Everyone in the group has a role and has a way to contribute;
- ⇒ Group members feel safe, respected, and valued;
- ⇒ The club is about service-learning: identifying real environmental issues, projects which address them, and structured time to reflect and evaluate;
- ⇒ The club is FUN.

Reaching all of these elements takes time and patience. The remainder of this section will help you create a strong group, recruit participation, and stay organized.

Setting Ground Rules

Begin the group experience by setting the ground rules. As a warm-up, go over the YMCA House Rules. They provide a great starting point for developing the rules for your group. Use the YMCA House Rules hand out that is provided to review each ground rule and add any additional ground rules decided upon by the group. It is important for the group to be involved in setting some of their own ground rules, as well as understanding the expectations of the YMCA.

YMCA House Rules

1. ***Speak for yourself...not for anybody else.*** Use "I" statements such as "I think" or "I feel" instead of "Everyone knows."

2. ***Listen to others...then they'll listen to you.*** Sometimes we are too busy thinking about what we are going to say next to really listen to what is being said.

3. ***Avoid put-downs...who needs 'em?*** We will sometimes disagree and that's okay. Let's not put down another person even though we may disagree with his or her view on a subject. Jokes or kidding that makes others feel bad is not funny. Nonverbal put-downs also hurt. These include facial expressions and gestures.

4. ***Take charge of yourself...you are responsible for you.*** You will learn about yourself and others only if you choose to. You are in charge of your attitude toward this experience.

5. ***Show respect...every person is important.*** You show respect when you listen while others are speaking, by showing an interest in what others have to say, and by following the basic ground rules we've agreed on.

Another suggested ground rule is "It's okay to pass." It is important that people feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. No one should be forced to participate or be put down for choosing not to at any time.

Another common ground rule is "Expect unfinished business." Most topics could be discussed for longer than the session allows. Encourage club members to continue their discussion during their free time if they so choose.

Following a discussion of the ground rules, non-threatening, light-hearted icebreakers should be introduced as a warm-up before delving into group building exercises. It takes time to build trust within a group, but you can influence how quickly that happens.

Defining a Leadership Structure That Works For Your Club

This may well be one of the most difficult things your club will face. Will you select or elect leadership? Who will facilitate your club meetings? Who will be responsible for organizing projects? What sort of structure do you want to work with?

It's really important that you think about these questions. Not examining them leads to more trouble than just sitting down with your group and coming to some sort of decision about how you want to function. This is one of the first things you need to have defined in your club. And, then remember this proverb - "the only thing that never changes is that everything changes." Minor adjustments and sometimes complete overhauls are required to keep the leadership structure functional. Do the best you can and develop a structure that you can work with for at least a year.

You're almost always better off with some leadership than without. A leadership structure that is well defined allows for good communication and a mechanism for decision making. There are many ways to create this structure. **Some ideas include:**

⇒ Elect a group of three to four leaders who share the responsibilities of your club (planning and leading meetings, planning and carrying out projects, working with the community, etc.).

⇒ Develop a committee structure where your club is broken down into smaller working groups that can deal with different club interests or areas. This works particularly well with large clubs.

⇒ Develop a rotational leadership model where different students are in charge at different times. For instance, members would sign up in pairs to lead meetings or take the lead on a project. This works extremely well in helping develop leadership skills amongst all your club members, especially younger or new ones.

LEADING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

One of the most important skills for club leaders to develop is the ability to run effective meetings. There are three parts to consider: planning the meeting, conducting the meeting, and follow-up after the meeting.

Planning the Meeting

Preparation is the key to leading an effective meeting. It begins with developing an agenda and following a few, simple planning tips.

The Agenda

The agenda provides an outline for the meeting. It generally identifies the order of business to be accomplished within a specified time. The teen leaders should always jointly prepare a written agenda before any meeting. Here is a sample agenda. (The **Weekly Club Outlines** section offers specific suggestions.)

Sample Agenda

1. Call to order and roll call
2. Opening Thought or Group Builder/Ice Breaker
3. Review Old Business, Committee Reports
4. New Business (on-going project planning or fundraising)
5. Announcements (upcoming projects, events, or trainings)
6. Closing Thought

Often club meeting agendas are not formal. However, the agenda should include certain components, which can be summarized as follows:

- *Focus on purpose.*
- *Record keeping.*
- *Review and update club finances.*
- *Reports from sub-committees.*
- *Club Activities.*
- *Program Enhancement (speakers, video...etc.).*
- *Closing.*

Additional Planning Tips

The following are additional tips for meeting planning:

- Hold meetings on the same day each week or month and at the same time. Coming to meetings becomes part of each member's regular routine.
- Schedule some social time before starting the meeting. This will help solve the problem of late arrivals. It will also give everyone the chance to catch up on what's been happening. Always assign a time limit to each agenda item. In trying to set a time limit, you may discover that there is not enough time for all items at one meeting and some will have to be dealt with at future meetings.
- Arrive early at the meeting site and get the room set up before members start arriving. Once they start arriving, your full attention should be focused on interacting with them.
- Display the agenda so everyone knows what the meeting will focus on.

Follow Up After the Meeting

Too often, once a meeting has adjourned, there is little follow up. There are important steps to take as soon as possible after the meeting:

1. Create a "to do" list for yourself based on decisions and agreements made at the meeting. Write out the list while they are still fresh in your mind.
2. Make note of what others agreed to do during the meeting and select a day on which you will check with them on their progress.
3. Develop a tentative agenda for the next meeting listing all the issues that will require action or discussion.
4. Contact absent members to find out why they were absent (if the reason is unknown), and update them on what was decided at the meeting.
5. Make sure thank-you notes are sent to any guest speakers or others deserving recognition.

Publicity and Recruitment

Finding the teens who will assume leadership in your newly formed club will not be enough. Now the exciting part will begin...FINDING MEMBERS! This may sound easy but it isn't. Teens have very busy schedules. They have committed themselves to many different worthwhile activities. You somehow have to find what makes your club unique.

How will you reach new members? Should it be through flyers, and open house, presentations, etc.? One of the most effective tools which is overlooked by many is WORD OF MOUTH. The core group of teen can be effective in spreading the "good word" about the program, and what it can offer to teens.

Ideas on how to publicize your club include:

- ✓Make posters or flyers to display
- ✓Put notices and information in your school bulletin or community newsletter
- ✓Visit classrooms or organizations to talk about your club
- ✓Do a first project early on to get people's attention
- ✓Contact the media and invite them to cover your projects and events
- ✓Take a sign up list at your first club meeting to keep in touch with members
- ✓Challenge every member to bring a friend to the next meeting
- ✓Do a new member orientation at the beginning, middle, and end of year

Release and Waiver Information

Your local YMCA will provide you with a registration form for all your club members. We also encourage you to keep a running list of your club members, when they come to meetings and club projects. This could be as simple as a sign-in sheet or list of names with columns for checking attendance. An example of a sign in sheet is provided on the next page.

Make sure that your local YMCA provides you with the appropriate waivers and release forms before you carry out any projects, evening, weekend or overnight activities.

You will need these forms:

- **a liability waiver**
- **a medical release**
- **a photo release**

Club Sign IN Sheet

Month of : _____

Name of YMCA or School: _____

Club Member	Meeting	Project	Meeting	Project	Meeting
Example: John Doe	√ 5/1	√ 5/10		√ 5/18	√ 5/28

Introduction to Weekly Club Outlines

In this section you will find weekly club meeting outlines and agendas to help you structure your meetings throughout the school year. These outlines are flexible, so add your own touch. You'll know what is most appropriate for your group.

These outlines set forth a basic structure for the first several weeks of the school year. Afterwards, it will be up to the advisor and student leadership to shape experiences based on the needs of the group. These outlines should help set a positive tone, provide a regular meeting structure, and get everyone off to a good start.

Week One:	Introductions	Week Four:	Defining and Assessing the
Week Two:	Brainstorming/crawl projects		Community/Environment
Week Three:	Setting Goals	Week Five:	Stepping up the Action

Remember, these outlines can be used by student leaders or teacher advisors. Each outline has been drafted to fit in during the typical length of a school club meeting - between thirty to 45 minutes. (Sometimes it takes longer to accomplish some of these tasks. Don't be afraid to adapt as necessary. Take two or three meetings to accomplish a task if need be.) On each outline you might see mention of Icebreaker, Group Builder, and Closure Activities. Refer to the **leadership development section** for group building resources which fall into the following categories:

Icebreakers are fun activities that should literally "break the ice" for your group. Icebreakers should make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. Often times, you will use most of your icebreakers during the early part of the year as people are getting to know each other. However, when a new member joins your group, it will be important that you think about doing an icebreaker or at least providing a opportunity for group introductions. Think of it this way - every time someone new enters your group, you have a new group.

Group Building activities are sort of like advanced icebreakers. These activities do what their name suggests - they help build a group. Group builders will often involve more risk taking on the part of group members and they will often take longer to do than an icebreaker. Group building activities are fun, they often involve a problem-solving or group communication element, and will help build a sense of team spirit and cooperation.

Closure activities are just as important as group builders and icebreakers, and can be just as fun. A closure activity helps wrap up the meeting in a way that leaves everyone feeling good and ready to return the next week. A closure activity will help bring your club closer together and will provide an excellent link from one meeting to the next.

The most important thing to keep is that the more you can do to have fun, provide a consistent structure and format, and really involve club members in talking with one another and working together, the more you will be able to accomplish as a group. ***Share the leadership!*** Look through these club outlines to help give you ideas on how to make each meeting stand out and how to make your Earth Service Corps club the best it can be. HAVE FUN!

Week One

Your first meeting!!

Tips of the Week...

- This first meeting should give everyone a chance to get to know one another.
- Get people jazzed up about Earth Service Corps! Have fun with this meeting!
- Advertise for the meeting way ahead of time (give yourselves two weeks of publicity) anyway you can... Intercom or Channel One, Daily Announcements, newsletter, posters, assembly, etc.
- Think ahead as to what questions new members might have.

Goals for the Meeting:

- To introduce members to each other and to the club
- To set the tone and structure for club meetings
- To have fun

Meeting Outline:

I. **Welcome everyone** to the meeting - adult advisor and youth leaders should welcome the group together.

II. **Icebreaker Activity**: For the first meeting, it's important to do something that is low-key for everyone. A simple thing to do would be to just ask everyone to introduce themselves, why they came to the meeting today, and something fun... Like, their favorite flavor of ice cream, their least favorite cafeteria meal, etc.

III. **Introduce Earth Service Corps** - What is it? How does it stand apart from other clubs?
   - A. Introduce the mission and the four program components
   - B. Explain connection to the YMCA and that this is a national program
   - C. Share a little bit about your own club (*If your club is brand new, share some of your ideas as the teacher advisor or student leaders to get people excited!*:
     - What have you done in the past?
     - What sorts of projects have you taken on?
     - When did you start your club?
   - D. Structure of your club:
     - How often will we meet? When will we meet and for how long? Decide on leadership structure.
   - E. Sign up interested students!
     - Announce the next meeting
     - Make sure you collect names, numbers, grade level, and interest level.

IV. **Closure Activity:** Ask everyone before they do it to describe their impression of the club. They may only use ONE word to describe their impression, but it will still give you as the facilitator of the meeting a sense of how people feel after the first meeting. Now, as the facilitator and group organizer, pat yourself on the back. You did it!

Week Two

You will probably have some new faces and some of the faces from the week before may not be there. This happens. What you'll need to keep in mind, is that it's a new group every time someone leaves or joins in. To help the group adjust set aside time at every meeting for an icebreaker group builder. This will help you make everyone feel comfortable.

Tips of the Week

- To really get things started, start taking action!
- Plan a crawl project for the first month to get people involved.
- Keep the meeting flowing, active, and get folks moving!

Goals for the Meeting:

- To begin generating ideas from the group
- To engage the group in a hands-on crawl project to start the year off with ACTION
- To have fun

Meeting Outline:

I. Review briefly what happened during the previous meeting. Maybe invite someone from the group to share what took place at the last meeting.

II. **Icebreaker** - Pick one from the Icebreaker Activities List
Recommended: KNOTS (set a time limit on this one!)

III. **Brainstorm**: **Community** and the **environment**
Begin with a Group Brainstorm... (Review Brainstorming 101 in Project Section and make sure to share with the group the basic ground rules for brainstorming) Invite the group to brainstorm: What are things and places that everyone in the group shares? (Examples, we all breathe air and we all take the subway.) How do these things affect the community? Use this list to help you define "environment"?

IV. Use the results of the Brainstorm to plan your first **Crawl project**
Review the group's brainstorm list and identity those spaces or things that are most important to the group. (Explain to the group that this list will be important next week when the group begins to set down goals for the year.)

Now, brainstorm some ideas for small projects that the group might be able to do within the next week or two that can address something on the list. Pick one that everyone can agree on. Refer to the **Project Planning** section to make sure that everything can be addressed and everyone can participate. Congratulations! You just planned the first project!

IV. **Closing activity:** Select from the Closing Activities List.

Week Three

By this time, you should be able to tell who seems most interested and committed in the club. Folks who have made it to all of these first three meetings are definitely showing some real interest. Start getting folks thinking about what they want to accomplish this year...

Tips of the week...

- Review the YMCA house rules if you haven't already.
- Start and end your meetings on time. Be consistent.
- Keep advertising the club and club meetings so new members can join.

Goals for the Meeting:

- To set down some goals for the year (you can always add more later down the road)
- To set clear ground rules as a group about how you want to work together
- To have fun

Meeting Outline

I. **Icebreaker** - Select one from the Icebreaker Activities List
Recommended: Partner Introductions

II. Review as a group the YMCA house rules. Invite the group to share how they feel about those ground rules, if any additional group ground rules are needed, and how they feel they've done as a group so far... (Recommended: advisor or other adult should facilitate this conversation)

III. This week's topic: Goals for the year
What are our goals for this year? What do we want to accomplish as a group? (Refer to last week's list of shared spaces and things if needed.)

IV. Review all the ideas and suggestions and create a set of clear goals as a group.

V. **ClosingActivities** - Pick a fun one from the **Closing Activities List**

Week Four

You have now spent a month together as a club. This is a great time to start as a group to map resources and define issues for action-and to do it in a really fun way. It's also important to have completed (or be planning) a kick-off crawl project to get folks active and motivated! Review the section of the Appendix on Community Resource Mapping to help you get in the right mindset.

Tip of the week:

- What will distinguish your Earth Service Corps clubs from all the other clubs that are out there is ACTION. Make sure and take steps to do the little things that make a big difference - like school clean ups, recycling drives, etc.

Goals for the Week:

- Begin the process of mapping your community or the site you have picked for action
- Have fun!

Weekly Outline

I. **Icebreaker**: Pick one from the Activities List.
Recommended: Yurt Circle

II. Review with the group both the goals drafted at the last meeting and the environmental interests/concerns brainstormed at the meeting before that. Bring both out for the group to look at.

III. This week's topic: **Community Resource Mapping**
(Review Community Resource Mapping section first.) Explain to the club that before undertaking projects, it is important to understand the wealth of resources your community offers. Someone in the community may be very helpful in accomplishing your club goals!

Explain that resources can be divided into four groups and give examples of each (a chalkboard or newsprint/markers would be helpful tools):

Physical	Institutional	Organizational	Individual
Parks	Gov't agencies	Neighborhood council	The members of YESC

IV. Have members break themselves up into four committees—one for each resource group. Each will research a resource, asking the following questions:
- Identify the resource by name address, phone, contact.
- How can the resource help the club achieve its goals? (For example, if the goal is for the club to learn more about the Smithwick River, how can the local college help you learn more about how the club can have a positive impact on the river.)
- Does the resource have any project ideas for the club?

V. Tools for Resource Mapping
Newspaper articles: Both city and local neighborhood papers (if available)
Local library/librarian: Many libraries have files on significant local topics and librarians often know a great deal about what is happening in the community.
Phone book: Look in the blue pages for government agencies and in the yellow pages for organizations and businesses which might be resources
Neighbors, friends, and relatives: Ask those that you know best for ideas
Internet: Surf the net for the wealth of information out there. See what you can find.

VI. Review tasks and schedule next meeting.

VII. **Closing Activity**

Week Five

You are ready to take ACTION!

Tips of the week...

- Celebrate your success!
- Check in to make sure everyone feels good about what the club has done.
- Keep advertising the club and club meetings so new members can join.

Goals for the Meeting:

- *To plan more projects*
- *To have fun*

Meeting Outline

I. **Icebreaker:** Select one from the Icebreaker Activities List

II. **Report back:** What has each committee learned?
Create a Community Resource Map by listing resources and how they might be able to help the club. Create a separate list of ideas for projects.

III. **This week's topic: Next project**
After reviewing the club goals and ideas for projects developed from the Community Resource Map, brainstorm any new ideas. From this new list of ideas pick a crawl project and go for it! As the club gets better at doing projects, you can refer back to this list and pick *walk* and *run* projects, too!

IV. **Closing** - Pick a fun one from the **Closing Activities List**

Fundraising

A necessary part of any nonprofit venture is raising the money necessary to perform the tasks at hand. YMCA Earth Service Corps is no different. Though it is possible to maintain your club with very little funding, some additional dollars will be necessary to go on field trips, leadership weekends, and host environmental symposia. Many of the things required for the club can be donated supplies. The process for requesting these in-kind donations is the same as requesting cash donations, so in this section they are treated as one.

Five fundraising tips

1. Know what you are asking for.
2. Know who you want support from and who wants to support your club.
3. Know why they might be interested in giving you money.
4. Then, and only then, ASK.
5. Say "Thank you" sincerely and often.

Before you ask for anything, it is important to know what you are asking for. Many people are more than willing to share their resources; they ask only that those resources be used wisely. Having a well planned, well reasoned explanation of what you need and why you need it is integral to reassuring these donors that their resources will be wisely used. While for your own planning purposes this list may be exhaustively detailed, for the donors it needs to short and clear. This is true regardless of the kind of support you are requesting: for an event, a trip, or general support for the club.

Knowing who you want support from is also important. Raising money is a strategic process. You have to target your audience to ensure that both you and the donor get what you want from the interaction. In many cases, clubs raise money from friends, families, and community businesses because they want to highlight to the community the service they are providing. After all, who is more interested in seeing their communities improved but the people who live there. However, in some cases, you may choose to participate in a larger project that your local community does not have the resources to support fully. At this point, you might apply to larger corporations and foundations. For more specific information on this type of fundraising, see the Earth Service Corps' *Grantwriting Packet for Corporations, Foundations & Government Monies.*

Why would anyone want to give your club money?

This is an important question. If you host a car wash, your family, friends, and neighbors may bring their cars to you to support your endeavor - whatever that might be. But if you let people know that the car wash is to support converting the abandoned lot across the street into a playground, total strangers will bring their cars because they support your project.

Do research on your donors before you ask them for support. Do they go to the same school, do their children or grandchildren? How does the project impact them? These are important questions to address before you ask.

As likeable as you are, donors usually prefer a convincing argument before giving. Construct an argument before you ask for a donation. Write a short explanation that includes the process you went through in determining the project and explains what you learned through your community assessment and your project planning stages. You will use this document to convince the donors that the problem is as important to them as it is to you. Some donors are very explicit about what they are willing to fund. Some only give to water projects, others only to projects that involve specific neighborhoods. Don't try to fit a square peg in a round hole. Don't ask if the donor's needs and yours don't match.

Asking can be very difficult or very easy. Much depends on how much homework you did during the early stages of this process. If you've developed a good argument for your project, your work here will be much easier. In some cases, you should write to the potential donor in advance, explaining your project and asking for assistance. In other cases, it is best to go in person. This is especially true if you are asking a local business person. If you do talk to a potential donor in person, this is your opportunity to explain why you think this solution is the best one to address the problem. As you talk with them, involve them in the project. Invite their comments and suggestions to improve the project. You may even ask them to join you in doing the project.

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Finally, be sure to say thank you sincerely and often. People are often willing to be supportive: they rarely enjoy being used. You should thank every donor for their contribution either in person or in writing. If the donor has been especially generous, it may be appropriate to note their donation in publications or flyers – much like at concerts when a soft drink maker underwrites a performer's tour. If a donor helped you with a project early in the year, you may also invite the individual to your end of year celebration and thank them again publicly.

How to ask

As has already been discussed, how you ask can make a big difference. If you are conducting a bake sale or a car wash or some other event, advertising the event well in advance is the best way to get a response. If you are asking for $250 from a local business professional, it may be more appropriate to write a letter or call to request a personal meeting. In almost all cases, it is preferable to ask for the donation in person. What you have to do to get to that point depends on how well you know the person you are asking.

Parents and friends are the easiest to ask because you have an existing relationship. They are more likely to be eager to support your endeavor, in part because they know you and in part because they probably can readily understand how your project will impact them.

Local businesses are a little harder. The owners of these businesses probably get dozens of requests each month to support a cause. They are also very busy trying to make their businesses successful. This is why it is vitally important for you to be prepared with a good argument for why this project is necessary and how you've designed the solution to be as cost effective as possible. How do you get a meeting? The most direct approach is to walk in and ask. You might also be able to get a parent, teacher, or friend to introduce you. Or you can send a letter in advance. Pick one that is most comfortable to you.

For corporations and foundations, an initial letter describing the project is almost always the best way to go. Be sure to call before you send the letter to identify the person to whom the letter should be sent. Never send a letter to the XYZ Corporation without including the name of the person you need to ask and their title. If you don't know who it is, call the company and ask for the Public Relations department or the President's office, either is likely to be able to answer your questions.

Fun and Easy Fundraising Ideas

Earth Grams: Instead of selling candy grams, sell Earth Grams! These can be sold in the lobby of your YMCA or during lunch in your school cafeteria. Candies and flowers make great Earth Grams. Make sure and provide a small card with an environmental message or fact and room for the person purchasing an Earth Gram to write a note to the person it's being sent to.

Eco-Car Wash: Take the old-fashioned car wash idea and do it ecologically! Use biodegradable soap and limited amounts of water. Educate car drivers with tips on how they can wash their cars at home in an earth friendlier fashion.

Christmas Tree Recycling: If you live outside the city limits, chances are you don't have curb-side pick up for your Christmas trees. So, set up a Christmas tree recycling site! Find a chipper and an experienced person to run the chipper and accept trees for a donation. All the trees can be chipped and the chippings can go to a local elementary school to lay fresh ground for the playfield.

Yard Sales: Why not encourage this kind of recycling, too? Have everyone in your club collect old clothes and materials from your homes and organize a club yard sale. Your parents will love you for cleaning the old stuff out of the house and you can make a nice amount of money.

Humanitees: Contact this t-shirt company to order t-shirts with environmental images and messages you can sell at your school or in your neighborhood. You can call them at (914) 741-2424.

Eco-Raffles: Collect fun, eco-friendly gifts and raffle them off! For example: you can raffle bikes (to encourage alternate modes of transportation), rollerblades (same reason), eco-groovy t-shirts, and gift certificates to vegetarian restaurants or to an earth friendly store.

Service-Learning

Desired Outcomes:
Through participation in service-learning activities, club members will...

- develop the habit of critical reflection on their experiences, enabling them to learn more throughout their lives;
- be more curious and motivated to learn;
- strengthen their ethic of social and civic response to community needs;
- feel more committed to addressing the problems underlying social issues;
- learn to see complex problems in a more approachable way and better imagine alternative solutions;
- demonstrate better understanding of how decisions are made and more sensitivity to how institutional decisions affect people's lives;
- learn how to work more cooperatively with other people on real problems; and realize that they *can* make a difference.

What is Service-Learning?

Service-Learning can be defined as **empowering young people to take leadership in providing service to their communities.** The National Youth Leadership Council has defined service-learning as "the combination of direct service by young people to meet significant unmet needs in the school or community with directed reflection and study, yielding personal development and cognitive outcomes." The service-learning concept recognizes that young people are valuable resources in society, that they have the energy and the skill to provide real service to their communities, and that they can learn from these service experiences.

Philosophy in Action

What distinguishes Earth Service Corps is not just the things we try to accomplish, but the way we go about accomplishing them:

- We want to develop skilled leaders. We do this by allowing teens opportunities to expand their leadership experience through service to their communities.
- We want young people to feel valued and empowered. We achieve this by supporting our teens' partnership with their teachers, community and the YMCA.
- We want teens to learn how to bring people together to solve problems. We accomplish this by involving teens in experiences where they must work as a group to find solutions to real issues.
- We believe the best learning comes through *doing*. The objectives YESC has laid out are important guides to the mission we are trying to accomplish; but it is in the things that we do that the most value can be found.

Why Service-Learning?

Service-Learning allows young people to participate in experiences:

- that meet actual community needs
- that provide structured time for a young person to talk, and write about what he/she did and saw during the actual service activity
- that provide young people with opportunities to use new skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities
- that help build the development of a sense of caring for others

To empower young people, the club advisor should:

1. establish clear expectation that teens will be leaders
2. assess leadership skills, styles and potential of each member of the group
3. have teens use existing strengths and skills, i.e., writing, drawing, speaking...etc.
4. teach teens new skills to accomplish club tasks and goals
5. provide a safe atmosphere for practicing leadership
6. expect mistakes as a part of learning
7. take time to build trust
8. be around to help
9. give advice privately, give praise publicly
10. use humor appropriately, to break tension
11. ask teens to do things, don't tell them
12. give teens room to succeed (and in some cases they may need the room to fail)
13. you'll recognize successful empowerment when teens initiate leadership on their own

Core Elements of Effective Service-Learning Activities

All service-learning activities/projects involve four (4) core elements:

⇒ Identifying essential learning outcomes
⇒ Planning and preparation
⇒ Meaningful service
⇒ Structured reflection

Identify essential learning outcomes: What will your club learn through participation in the service you are providing? Be clear about identifying what learning outcomes are BEFORE you begin. Set clear, attainable goals.

Planning and preparation: your club must decide on specific responsibilities for each club member (how to perform the actual service work); assess and research information on the individuals/communities to be served by the project; and assess and gather information about issues related to the service they provide.

Meaningful service: Is the project your club has chosen challenging? Is it significant to the club participants and to the community? Are other individuals or organizations committed to the project's implementation and willing to work in partnership with your club to achieve success?

Reflection: This is where the learning in service-learning takes place. Reflect and evaluate to gain valuable learning from the planning and implementation of your project.

Service-Learning Cycle

As you begin your service-learning project, you begin the service-learning cycle. The cycle is as follows:

- Step one - Identify a project
- Step two - Planning and preparation
- Step three - Meaningful service experience (doing the project!)
- Step four - Observation/evaluation
- Step five- Analysis
- Step six - New understanding
- Step seven - New application

During the entire cycle, you also participate in reflective activities. The reflection periods allow you to question what you are doing, to assess how you are feeling about the project, and to see if the group has achieved their original task.

It is important that club leaders and the club advisor remember that the cycle is a continuous loop. As they finalize step six, the group should start applying the knowledge the gained on the project to the development of their next project.

How to Generate Service Projects

Although there are many ways that teens may determine which service projects they would like to conduct, the methods to generate projects can be divided into five (5) categories:

1. **Who resources are in your community?**
   - map the resources of your community (see Community Resource Mapping and weekly outlines sections)
   - read local newspapers
   - conduct a community search
   - interview community residents and other community organizations
2. **Collaborate with existing programs: Who share similar values, are already involved in service projects, and can help us serve?**
3. **Focus on key public issues: What are the important issues on the public agenda?**
4. **Build on student expertise: What skills or knowledge do the teens have to offer others?**
5. **Elicit personal visions: How would teens like the world to be different?**

Once project ideas are generated, they must then be prioritized (which ones can be done first, which projects need specific equipment for its completion, etc.) and then the planning to execute the project will begin. Planning and more in-depth discussion of project generation will be covered in a later section. Project ideas include:

- Painting garbage cans
- Adopt a block
- Murals
- Environmental bulletin boards
- Recycling
- Art exhibits
- Poetry reading
- Trash removal
- Graffiti clean up

Reflection

One of the responsibilities of the club advisor is to facilitate constant reflection and evaluation for members throughout any project, activity, or group experience. As the club advisor it will be critical for you to help the group through all that is involved in carrying out the first few service projects. Selecting the right projects that build on the talents and skills of the group and are easy to accomplish is important to a group's momentum. Choose highly visible projects earlier on to help draw in more club members. Taking time out often during the planning and implementation of a project to ask the right questions helps the group see what they are learning. It also helps keep the tasks and goals in sight. Appropriate questions might include:

- Are we still on task?
- Does this meet the goals we originally laid out?
- How is everyone feeling?
- What do we need/want to do next?
- If this didn't work, why not?
- If it did work, what were the things that made it successful?
- What have we/you learned from this project or task?
- How would you do it differently next time?

This is by no means an exhaustive list or the only method of reflection. Reflection can also be conducted through creative expression, such as journal writing, skits, videos, photography, and sculpture. Your club may choose to create a group journal which documents projects and events throughout the year. The goals, tasks and needs of each group will determine the style and form of reflection.

Reflection and evaluation are somewhat similar; the questions to be asked are essentially the same. The difference is in when each occurs. Reflection happens throughout the process of putting on a project, or throughout the year as a club grows and changes. It is valuable for club members to understand what they are doing, why they are doing it, and how it's all working. Evaluation is most effective at the completion of a project, term or task. This is the time to look at the original goals and ask if they were achieved. Club members can measure their progress from the beginning to the end. They can make decisions about where to go next.

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Leadership Development

Desired Outcomes:
As a result of participating in YMCA Earth Service Corps, young people will:

1. learn and practice leadership skills, such as: group building, communication, running effective meetings, problem solving and consensus building;
2. explore and develop their own leadership styles;
3. initiate and plan service-learning projects, events, and activities;
4. learn to clarify their own values and respect those of others.

At the heart of YMCA Earth Service Corps is leadership development. Through running club meetings and selecting and organizing service-learning projects, every member of Earth Service Corps should have the opportunity to lead, to plan, and to work with a team of young people in addressing community needs.

One of the challenges in "teaching" leadership is deciding what leadership means and what specifics of leadership should be taught. These questions begin to unfold: What are the characteristics of good leaders? What models of leadership should be used? What are the various styles of effective leadership? Our goal is to help every club member address these questions and to provide experiences to explore, to practice, and grow by taking on leadership roles.

Earth Service Corps provides on going leadership development opportunities and support through leadership weekends, student advisories, and leadership workshops. Club Advisors and especially YMCA staff are tremendous resources in identifying activities which provide opportunities for leadership development.

The three broad skills areas which fall under the umbrella of leadership development are:

- Communication Skills,
- Problem Solving and Decision Making and
- Group Work.

In this section you will find activities in each of these three categories which will help you work with your club to develop more effective communication, problem solving and group work skills.

Keep in mind that every person has their own leadership style and that at times it is as (if not more) important to know when to follow than when to lead. Also remember that different situations require different styles of leadership. Strong leaders encourage leadership in others. Support your club by offering leadership opportunities for everyone. There are many ways to lead.

Leadership Skills

Communication

Communication skills are the very foundation of success. We have to communicate with a number of people in a variety of different settings in a variety of different ways to get things done. The stronger and more diverse our communication skills are, the better we will work with others, the better we will be understood, and the more successful you will be.
All behavior is communication, not only the things we say, but also the ways in which we say it.

Body language speaks just as loudly as verbal messages. It has been estimated that the average person speaks only 25 minutes a day in articulated speech. The rest of the time we communicate by smiling, frowning, grimacing, winking, raising an eyebrow, looking downward, avoiding eye contact or resorting to any number of other body language movements. It should be remembered that each culture has its own body language. In multi-cultural communities, it is especially important to learn the distinctions in body language.

The average adult spends about 30% of his or her waking hours in conversation. You already possess important communication skills. But are you using those skills effectively?

How To Communicate Effectively

- Organize your thought logically.
- Keep it simple, straightforward and use everyday words.
- Make your message meaningful to the audience receiving it.
- Look at the listener's response to what you are saying.

How Am I Going to Say It? [Speaking Voice]

- Volume- Your own voice always sounds louder to you than to a listener.
- Pitch-Making your voice rise and fall, giving it variety and meaning.
- Rate - Speed at which a person talks
- Articulate your words
- Choose the "right" words

Nonverbal Communication

- Body Language
- Gestures
- Eye Contact

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Symbol

Purpose: To help participants understand that different symbols mean different things to people and often require further dialogue to reach a mutual understanding.

Materials: Newsprint and Markers, work tables or broad flat surfaces

Directions: Place sheets of newsprint and markers on the tables. Explain that each person should take 5 minutes to draw some kind of symbol or group of symbols that best describes him/her as a person. It is important that everyone keep the meaning of their symbols private for now.

When everyone is done, ask everyone to post their symbols around the room. First, picture by picture, have everyone try to guess what the symbols mean, then see how many "connect" with what the drawer was trying to present by having the drawer explain the symbol. When all the symbols have been explained, open the discussion up for insights on symbols and communication.

Door Openers

Purpose: To give participants an opportunity to practice *door openers*, phrases that show others you're interested and that encourage them to keep talking

Materials: None

Directions:

1. Explain that one level of communication uses door openers that begin with such phrases as "I see..... Really..... You don't say," and expand into "Tell me about it," "I'd like to hear more," "I'd be interested in what you think," "Would you like to talk about it?"
2. Divide the group in half; name one half 1's and the other half 2's.
3. Tell each 1 to find a 2 and complete this sentence: "The reason I belong to the club is - - - - " Each 2 will respond with door openers to let the 1 know that she or he cares and accepts him or her and to communicate that she or he wants to be friends.
4. Have the 1 and 2 switch roles, and repeat the exercise.
5. Then have everyone change partners, and do it again.
6. End with some closing comments such as "Using door openers says to the other person, 'You have a right to express what you feel. I respect you as a person with ideas and feelings. I might learn something from you. I really want to hear your point of view. Your ideas are worth listening to and I want to get to know you'."

Doodle

Purpose: To enable participants to experience nonverbal communication and its effects

Materials:
Blank paper-1 sheet for each participant
Markers-1 for each participant

Directions

1. Explain that this activity is done without any talking.
2. Ask each person to draw on a sheet of paper a symbol or design that describes what each hopes to gain by being a member of the club. No words, just symbols.
3. Instruct everyone to communicate with the others by relating to their drawings. Have each person find a partner and on the partner's sheet of paper, draw something that shows support for what he or she has drawn.
4. Now ask each person to draw a symbol or design that describes his or her feelings at the moment on the other side of the paper.
5. Still without talking, partners are to communicate to each other their support of each other's feelings by drawing something to demonstrate it.
6. Close with a *verbal* discussion of how it felt to be unable to communicate feelings in words. Was it easier or harder? Why?

Say it Another Way

Purpose: To give participants an opportunity to practice paraphrasing

Materials: None

Directions:

1. Explain that one level of communication is represented by paraphrasing. This is a way of listening and communicating to the speaker that "I am listening to you, because I can repeat some of what you said. You are important to me; what you are saying is important to me; and I am going to show you how important by listening carefully."
2. Demonstrate by having someone complete the sentence, "When I see the future, I see myself...." Repeat what you heard the speaker say. Point out that a listener doesn't have to repeat every word he or she hears-just enough to let the speaker know the listener really heard what was said.
3. Divide the group into smaller groups of three. One person will be a speaker; one will be a paraphraser; one will be an observer. The observer listens and then fills in any gaps the paraphraser leaves in his or her response. This process continues until all have had a chance to do all three things.
4. Remind everyone that the sentence to complete is, "When I see the future, I see myself . . . . "
5. In closing, ask participants to share what they learned about communicating via this exercise.

Problem Solving and Decision Making Activities

The five steps to problem solving include:

1. Defining the problem
2. Identifying possible solutions
3. Selecting a solution
4. Applying the solution
5. Evaluating the results

Apply these steps to this problem...

All Aboard Our Planet

Lay a blanket at least 5 x 5 on the ground and have approximately one third of the group get on the blanket, explaining to the group that this is now the planet earth with an abundant supply of resources for its population (the people on the blanket). Now, have folks get off and fold a corner or side of the blanket so that it is now 1/3 smaller than it started. Now ask about two thirds of the people to get on (explaining that while population is quickly growing, so is the disappearance of natural resources) everyone's feet must be completely on the blanket. Once this is accomplished, clear the planet, fold it in half, and have everyone try to climb on board. Remember, everyone must fully be on the planet.

In decision making, we often are asked to take personal stands on issues... Try these activities to bring out the personal opinions of your group members.

Where do I Stand?

Purpose: To allow the group to take a stand on various issues and To allow an opportunity for group members to explore their beliefs

Materials: None

Directions:

1. Label each corner of the room as follows:
   - Strongly agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Somewhat Disagree
   - Strongly disagree
2. Have the entire group stand in the middle of the room.
3. Read one of the following statements and have group members move to the corners that best represent their opinions. This should be done without discussion. WARNING: it is easy for people to begin debating or attacking back and forth from where they stand. Re-assert the ground rules and make sure that everyone says only why they made their decision, not why someone else's decision or position is wrong. Hundreds of issues can be addressed (though not all in one session), so create statements and questions that fit the needs of your group.

QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

- I believe the 21-year-old drinking law is a good one.
- I believe parents should be allowed to discipline their children any way they feel is appropriate.
- I believe if a law is wrong, according to my values, I am within my rights to break it.
- I am afraid of growing old.
- I feel I have a good education.
- A top priority for me, while looking for jobs, is the amount of money I make.
- Leadership has always been easy for me. It's a role I slip into.
- In the balance between the task at hand and the feelings of the group members, I must put the task first and deal with feelings second.
- A leader must be able to discipline his/her followers or lose his/her power as a leader.
- People must be lead...people perform best under leaders who are creative, imaginative, and aggressive – under leaders who lead.
- Manipulation is a key ingredient to effective leadership.
- It is important that people understand the "why" behind any decision I make.

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4. After everyone has moved to a corner, have each turn and discuss the issue with someone in the same corner. Then ask for volunteers to share their opinions with the entire group. Be sure to allow time to hear an opinion from each corner. Repeat this process for each statement.
5. Add additional statements based on the reaction of your group. Or use one of the topics for a longer discussion if it stirs a lot of group reaction.

What would you do if?

Purpose: To provide participants an opportunity to discuss key value issues and determine how they would behave in certain situations.

Materials: None

Directions:

1. Divide the group into smaller groups of three.
2. Ask each group to discuss the following statements.

What Would You Do If ... ?

1. Your best friend wants to go somewhere against her parents' wishes and tell them she's going to be with you as a cover-up. Would you
   a. say you won't cover for her and then worry about losing her friendship?
   b. agree, because her friendship is more important to you than being honest?
   c. refuse, explaining your feelings and hoping she'll see your side?
   d. say, "OK this time, but don't involve me again"?

2. As a favor to a friend, you are asked to address a group on a subject unfamiliar to you. Would you
   a. agree to do it but come unprepared, then "wing it" and give the best showing you can under the circumstances?
   b. agree to do it but then feel anxious for days worrying how you'll do it?
   c. agree, research the subject, and come prepared to give the talk?
   d. refuse, because it's too much trouble and not worth the risk of embarrassing yourself ?

3. You're a conscientious worker, but the boss at your part-time job gives a promotion to someone less deserving than you. Would you
   a. keep up the good work, but take extra time at lunch and breaks, because they don't appreciate you?
   b. point out errors in the work of the person who got promoted to show how much more competent you are?
   c. discuss your performance with your boss, indicate that you want to be considered for the next promotion, and continue your good work?
   d. quit, because you won't work for anyone who can't see your true worth?

4. You saw a student in your history class take the answers to an exam from the teacher's desk. Now, unless the teacher finds out who the guilty parry is, the whole class will have to take a new test. Would you
   a. send a note to the teacher telling what you saw but leave it unsigned so you won't have to get involved?
   b. say nothing, because it's wrong to tattle on someone?
   c. tell what you saw, because it's wrong to withhold the truth and let the class take the consequences?
   d. tell what you saw, because you don't want to study for another test?

5. No one but you is available to drive your grandmother to her doctor's appointment, which conflicts with a game you really want to see. Would you
   a. agree to do it, but show how disappointed you are to be stuck with the task?
   b. give her money to take a cab so you won't miss the game?
   c. take her and feel disappointed but not show it, because she didn't mean to spoil your plans?
   d. suggest that she change the appointment, because your friends expect you to be at the game?

6. You sent in a check for two tickets to a concert and, by mistake, you were sent three. Would you
   a. give the third ticket to a friend who couldn't afford to buy one?
   b. forget about it?
   c. send it back?
   d. sell it to a friend who couldn't get one?

7. Your closest friend goes to a party with a date who acts loud and unruly and causes your friend a lot of embarrassment. After they leave, everyone is talking about how badly the date acted and criticizing your friend. Would you
   a. make excuses for your friend and try to say something nice about the date?
   b. try to change the subject?
   c. defend your friend and ask the crowd not to judge him or her by the conduct of the date?
   d. agree, because the person acted truly awful, and your friend should know better?

8. You desperately want the lead in the school play, but someone equally qualified is chosen. Would you:
   a. sincerely congratulate the chosen lead but bow out of the production, because it would hurt too much to stick around?
   b. work on the production but harbor feelings of anger and jealously toward the director and other actors?
   c. accept a lesser role and do everything you can to make the play a success?
   d. become openly critical of the play and the people in it?

9. A charitable organization you deeply believe in sends you 10 raffle tickets to sell, offering to send more when you've sold those. Selling raffle tickets is something you dislike doing. Would you
   a. send the tickets back with a note offering to serve in some other way?
   b. buy the tickets yourself and consider you've done your part?
   c. set aside your reluctance and sell, sell, sell?
   d. throw the tickets away and wait for a fundraiser you want to sell tickets for?

Group Work

Building a strong group requires time, energy, and patience. Earth Service Corps views leadership in the context of the group experience. This means that leadership is absolutely related to being able to work effectively with others. Effective leaders create effective groups that people feel safe in, want to be a part of, and feel like they are challenged and learning from others.

In order to build a strong group, there are many dynamics to be aware of. Think back to a time when you were just getting involved with a group... Think about some of the questions or concerns you may have had at the time: "Will I like this group?" "What will the others think of me?" "Will I be accepted?" "What will my role in this group be?"

Your main role as a leader and facilitator is to help everyone feel like they are part of a group where they are needed and wanted. Keep in mind these five stages of group development:

- Forming : Getting acquainted
- Norming: Setting goals, rules and expectations
- Storming: Testing each other and the leader
- Conforming: Reaching a state of trust and openness
- Performing: Working all together and being productive

These stages are not always clear cut and the group can flow in and out of those stages throughout its existence. Each group has its own unique timetable of stages. Remember, every time someone leaves or joins your group you have a new group. These next activities are wonderful ways to build a stronger sense of a cohesive group. Have fun with them!

GROUP BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Ice Breakers:

3 Truths and a Lie

Have each person write down three truths and a lie on a card about themselves and reads them to the group. The group tries to figure out which items are true and which is the lie.

Partner Introductions

Break your group up into pairs. Invite each pair to find out three things about the other person. Have each person introduce their partner to the larger group.

M and M or TP Get to Know You Game

Pass a bowl of M and Ms or a roll of toilet paper around the circle. Tell players to take as much as they want and once everyone has M and Ms or toilet paper, ask them to tell the group one thing about themselves for each M and M or sheet of toilet paper that they took.

Group Juggling or Name Toss

Bring a half a dozen tennis balls (or anything else that can be easily tossed). With all the players in a circle, have everyone go around and say their name. Then have the first thrower say, "Here you go, John," as he/she tosses the ball to John. John responds by tossing the ball to someone else, saying there name first to make sure the person is paying attention. The last catcher should toss the ball to the first and the process repeats itself in the same order only this time more balls are added until all six are moving around the circle in the same pattern.

Group Builders and Closure Activities

Book Ends
The "book" stands in the middle of two other people who are the "book ends." The book ends get into their spotting stance and face the book's shoulders. Slowly the book leads into the arms of one bookend who catches the weight of the book with their hands and arms. That bookend gently pushes the book in to the arms of the other bookend. The book goes back and fort and gradually lower and he/she is comfortable and the spotters are capable. Also known as Trust Falls.

Trigger Questions
A trigger question is just a simple query to start a group discussion. For example, some questions could include: What is the most pressing environmental problem we face? Who is your hero and why? How might your best friend describe you? The key element here is that everyone has a chance to respond to the trigger question and that the house rules are in effect.

Yurt Circle
A yurt is a self-supporting Mongolian dwelling. In Yurt Circle, have players form a circle and designate every other player as an "innie" or an "outie." On the count of three, the innies lean inward and the outies lean outward. The inward pull of the innies will be offset by the outward pull of the outies and the structure should be self-supporting in this way.

Knots
Everyone stands in a tight circle and puts their hands into the center. Each player grabs a different player's hand with each of their own. Now, every player is connected to two other players and, as a group, they must untangle themselves without letting go of hands.

Closure Activities:

Temperature of the Group
Ask group members to raise their thumbs up (indicating positive feelings), down (negative), or sideways (so-so) to show the group how they feel the meeting or project went. Ask group members to explain their feelings.

One Word
Ask group members to share one word which describes how they are feeling about the group right now and explain.

+ and -
Brainstorm a list with the entire group on what went well and what could be better...

Journal
Any personal or group journal writing is a helpful tool in on-going evaluation and in closure activities. Your club can participate in "Collective Journaling" on the YESC website: www.yesc.org.

Environmental Education

Desired Outcomes
As a result of participating in ESC, young people will:
1. see individual environmental issues within broader societal, historical, ecological, and international contexts;
2. understand scientific principles related to environmental issues
3. develop critical thinking skills: evaluate information, examine biases, and interpret events and situations

The "environment" is more than National Geographic. It's the air we breathe, the walls we look at, and the space we share. In Earth Service Corps, we look at the whole picture to address the needs of that space. To understand what's going on, we have to get out and experience our community, to learn about the earth we share and how it works.

Each of us lives in different environments. We go home to different neighborhoods, attend different schools, and participate in different communities. The important thing to remember is that the environment is the place where we live. It's not some far off distant land where everything is green and forested. Look at where you live. This is your environment and this is the environment we are trying to improve.

In Earth Service Corps, we take three approaches to environmental education: Hands-on learning, Community resources, and Symposia.

Hands-on Learning

What better way to learn than a hands-on approach? There are a number of activities that your club can undertake that will enhance your club's understanding of its environment. Get out there and get dirty! Find great service projects, do research, and learn from experts in the field. Activities can range from a school garden to growing worms to the Globe Project. See the end of this section for more details.

Community Resources

The community is full of resources to help your club develop a better understanding of the issues you face. Contact your state or city agencies, local colleges, or corporations to invite a professional expert to speak to your club about an issue. Or, better yet, go visit them at their workplace and learn how they deal with the issue there.

Symposia

"Symposia" is a fancy word for coming together to focus on a particular subject. Typically, it's a one-day event bringing together teens, scientists, engineers, educators, and environmental leaders to discuss an issue in depth. It challenges the teen participants to find solutions to complex problems through negotiation and consensus building. Symposia should be designed to inform and inspire attendees to further community action.

HOW MUCH WATER DO WE USE?

Purpose: To increase awareness of how much water we use on a daily basis -. to illustrate the limited availability and the value of water

Materials:

- access to water
- containers for measuring water
- bucket for "waste" water
- 2 wash basins
- 2 buckets for water
- sponge
- washing soap
- a watch to keep track of time
- always use the same cup/container for measuring, and put all used water into the large bucket - "waste" water
- keep track of the number of containers of water you use for all activities
- keep track of the amount of time it took to go and get the water each time you needed it

IN A TYPICAL DAY... (fill up one bucket with water)

1. You need 2 cups of water to make porridge - put this into the "waste" bucket, do not use it again.
2. You need to wash the dishes - put water into the wash basin, and add the soap (or pretend). How many cups did you use? Write it down.
3. You need water to wash some clothes - put the water into the wash basin.
4. Your baby and 3 children need some water to drink. Give them one cup each. Pour the water into the "waste" bucket.
5. You need some water for your plants. Pour some water on the ground to make it wet. How many cups did it take to wet the soil? Write it down.
6. You have been working very hard all day and you need to take a bath to wash all the dirt off. How many cups of water do you need? Write it down.
7. You are very thirsty and you need a drink of water. How much water do you drink? Write it down.

DISCUSSION:

1. What would you do if you only had one bucket of water to do ALL the tasks? Could you have saved any water by doing something different?
2. Would it have been better to do the activities in a different order.
3. Was there enough water? Did you find the water heavy to carry?
4. Did the water get dirty quickly? What would happen if you had to drink dirty water every day?

FOREST ROLEPLAY

Purpose: To make people more aware of the many different animals and organisms that live in the rainforest and their importance to each other

Materials:
Have copies of the rainforest role cards for each person (if there are more than 10 people, some can have the same role).

Now, explain that you are going to give people minutes to play in a tropical rainforest. They a spend two minutes reading their card and deciding on an appropriate movement, voice and personality to go with their role while mingling with the others. Give out one role card to each person. After two minutes, ask people in their roles, to mingle and interact for 10 minutes, moving around and having conversations. The aim is to find out what connections they have with of the other characters in the forest. Encourage them to act out their roles rather than read out what is on their role card.

FOREST ROLE CARDS

Trees
You are the most striking feature of the forest! Full grown trees form a green canopy of leaves above the ground year round, trapping sunlight to make food out of carbon dioxide and water. You shade the rest of the forest making it dim. Your roots in the soil take up food and water. Many other plants and animals live on you; monkeys eating your fruit, bugs under your bark birds nesting in your branches, butterflies drinking your flower nectar, forest people using your wood for boats and houses, climbing plants hanging from you. There are a huge number of different kinds of trees, many with useful products such as rubber, oils, medicines, and probably many others be discovered. When you die you come crashing down, leaving a gap which allows direct sunlight to reach the forest floor and young trees to grow up and take your place. You are decomposed by insects, fungi, and bacteria helping you to recycle you.

Sunshine
You are the source of energy for the forest. All the green plants use your light energy to make food. Only as small amount of light gets through the thick vegetation to the ground. Here in the tropics you are always high the sky at midday and very strong year-round. Your warmth heals the forest helping make all the chemical reactions of life go faster than in a cold climate. Your heat evaporates water and warms the air which rises, forming thick rain clouds which downpour nearly every day.

Water
You come in many forms and are essential for life. You travel from soil into and through the plants carrying nutrients, and you are combined with carbon dioxide by the energy of sunlight to make food for the plant. You evaporate, mostly from leaves of plants, into the air keeping it humid so that things rarely dry out in the forest. You rain in torrential downpours nearly every day, watering the forest flowing in streams and rivers that are home to many animals and plants and which provide transport for people.

Soil
You are made up of many different kinds of material; pieces of rock and clay, both large and microscopic, water with many different chemicals dissolved in it, decaying plants and animals, and air spaces too. The roots of plants grow through you and draw in your minerals and water. They help to hold you together, preventing you from being washed away. You are home to many different animals; worms, beeves, millipedes, and many others who feed on you and the other life within you, such as the millions of microscopic bacteria, fungi and other organisms. You are the place where dead things and droppings are broken down into forms which are used again by the forest; hence you are constantly changing.

Insects
There are millions of different kinds of you, all living in different ways; butterflies, moths, beetles, ants, wasps, bugs, mosquitoes, and many more. Some eat leaves or fruit. Some feed on nectar or pollen from flowers. Some catch other insects or small organisms, or suck blood of larger animals. Other insects feed on dead plants and animals and are so important in recycling nutrients. You are also eaten by other animals and sometimes plants too. Most insects have two or more Stages to their lives and the larvae may lead a different life from the adults. Many insects have a very particular lifestyle, e.g., only living on a particular kind of tree, at a particular height, and that tree can only be pollinated by that particular insect.

Air
You fill all the gaps in the forest, wherever there is space around and within the other things. You are made up of different gases; nitrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide and others, as well as water vapor. Your oxygen is vital for life in the forest; nearly all living things use it to obtain energy from their food. Carbon dioxide and water are produced as a result Green plants use the carbon dioxide to make food, giving off oxygen. So you are constantly changing but maintain a balance; if this is upset it will have drastic effects on life. When warmed up you rise above the forest. As you rise you cool and the water vapor in you forms droplets making clouds. Within the forest you are usually fairly still but when you move at any speed you are called "wind". You are always mixing with air from other parts of the world.

Smaller Plants
There are lots of plants other than trees in the forest. Many of you live below the trees on the dimly lit forest floor. Others are climbers such as lianas and passion flowers. Some, such as many orchids and ferns, are "epiphytes" living on the trees without roots. There are also water plants that live in streams, rivers and pools. Just like trees you need light, air, nutrients, and water. Some plants get extra nutrients by catching and digesting insects. Flowering plants need to be pollinated by wind, water droplets, insects, birds, bats or other animals. Like all other living things when you die you are recycled and used again either by being eaten or decomposing in the soil.

Forest People
Your ancestors have lived in the forest for thousands of years so you understand well how to live there. The forest provides everything you need for life. You eat food that you either hunt, gather, or grow. You are skilled at making houses and boats from trees, and you know which plants are good for medicines or poisons. You live in small villages and will move to another place after a few years. Because there are only small numbers of you and the forest is large, this does not permanently damage the forest. You are concerned because recently people from faraway have moved in and cut down huge areas of forest saying that the land belongs to them. The forest is your home. It gives you things for life and you have a great respect and love for it.

Large Animals
You include a variety of animals such as monkeys and other apes, bats (big ones!), large cats, snakes, mongoose, and lots more--each with a different way of life. Large carnivores, such as tigers, feed on other animals and have no natural enemies except humans. Apes and bats tend to eat fruit or leaves, but also eat some insects and other animals; they may be eaten by larger carnivores or humans. Things that animals cannot digest and waste products are all returned to the soil in their droppings. Like most other living things, you use air and water and will eventually die and be recycled. You large animals are fewer in number than the smaller living things and are more spread out in the forest, needing a large area of land to support each of you. The forest is your home and if much of it is destroyed you will lack food, suffer from overcrowding or mat not even have a place to live at all.

Birds
There are many different kinds of you, each living in different ways. Most nest in trees. Some of you eat insects or other animals like frogs and spiders. Some of you feed on flower nectar and are important because you pollinate plants so they can form their fruit. Many birds eat fruit and seeds from the trees or smaller plants, and you may be important in spreading the seed to new places where they can grow. Large birds of prey may eat other birds or large animals such as monkeys. Birds are themselves eaten by larger animals or forest people, or else when you die you are decomposed by bacteria and other small living things, returning nutrients to the soil.

From. Y Care International, CreActivity, *1988*

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THE WEB OF LIFE

1. Ask everyone to stand in a circle and give a ball of wool to each person. Explain that the wool is to be used to make lines of connection between the different characters in the rainforest. (See the rainforest role-play game for the characters of the rainforest. It is probably a good idea to play that game before playing the Web of Life.)

2. Instruct them to tie the loose end of their ball of wool around their waist.

3. They then agree with someone else in the circle that they have a connection with each others role in the forest. They throw their balls of wool to each other, pass the wool around their waists and throw the balls back. Repeat this with other people until a complete web of connections is made. (Or the wool runs out!)

4. Call things to a halt when it looks like the web is complete, then ask everyone to gently move outwards so that the web is pulled taught. Ask people to look at the web and consider how all the elements in a rainforest support each other. Comment on how this could also represent the whole planet, where seas, rivers, atmosphere, land and living communities are all interdependent.

5. Now get out a sharp pair of scissors and explain that they represent the threats to life in the rainforest and the planet. Make cuts into the web one by one and explain what they represent.

   Cut 1: Trees are felled for making paper and the furniture business, destroying the habitat for plants, animals and forest peoples.
   Cut 2: The land is cleared for cattle ranching to feed the western hamburger market and the soil is left bare to be washed or blown away.
   Cut 3: The lack of vegetation causes a drop in rainfall and what was forest becomes desert.
   Cut 4: Towns and industry are developed causing pollution of air, soil and water.
   Cut 5. The loss of forests and the burning of coal, oil and gas cause changes of climate worldwide over many years.
   Cut 6: Oppressed and poverty stricken people fight for their rights. Wars are fueled by the arms trade and military aid from the Western world.

"IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND" and "FREEING THE BIRD" (MEDITATIONS)

Have everyone sit quietly in a circle and ask them to hold their hands in front of them, cupped as if holding a globe the size of a football. Ask them to close their eyes and allow their imaginations to be guided by your words.

'Imagine you are holding a miniature version of the planet earth in the palm of your hand. You can see what is happening to it; clouds of pollution rising from the cities, the green forests shrinking, the 'concrete jungles' expanding, the deserts creeping over the fertile land, millions of refugees running away from war and famine, the flash of explosions, and the mournful cry of whales so near to extinction they cannot find a mate.

Now close your hands around the globe for a few seconds before opening them again to find the world as you would like it to be. What is it like? How do people treat each other and the environment they live in? (Pause for a moment).

Now imagine the earth is shrinking in your hand until it is small enough to keep safely in your pocket or purse. Remember that its life is your responsibility along with everyone else here. Think quietly for a minute and decide on one thing you would like to do to help keep the earth safe for future generations."

You might be interested in following up this meditation with one called "Freeing the Bird" which is a very uplifting way to bring this activity to a close.

Ask your group to visualize a beautiful song bird sitting on the counselor's shoulder. Give some of the characteristics of the bird (it is a gentle bird, and is frightened by noises; it loves to sing; it is playful yet strong...) The counselor now passes the bird silently to the next person. Everyone should be very quiet, so as not to frighten the bird. The second person might want to put the imaginary bird on his finger, to play little tricks with the bird, to listen to the bird's song etc. Then, the bird is passed to the next person, and so on.

Finally, the bird will return to the counselor. At this point, the counselor gets up and walks to the middle of the mom, saying: "This bird represents all our hopes for the future; it has touched each one of us, and it now represents our insights about the world we live in, our anger at the injustices, our hopes the successes, and our love and laughter. I'm going to release this bird, so that it will soar above us and will help us in the days ahead." Then, with arms held up to the sky, the counselor releases the bird.

From: Y Care International, CreActivity, 1988 and CUSO, Development Education: Basics and Tools, 1988.

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Other Suggested Activities

GLOBE program

The Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) is a worldwide network of students, teachers, and scientists working together to study and understand the global environment.

Globe students make a core set of environmental observations at or near their schools and report their data via the Internet. Scientists use GLOBE data in their research and provide feedback to the students to enrich their science education. Each day, images created from the GLOBE student data sets are posted on the World Wide Web, allowing students and visitors to the GLOBE website to visualize the student environmental observations.

Make a landfill

This is a great project to learn about how a landfill is made. Take an old 20-gallon aquarium and remove the glass from one side. Replace the glass with piece of plywood into the bottom of which you've inserted a six-inch piece of pipe. Line the bottom of the aquarium with 2 inches of clay. Lay two sheets of plastic on top of the clay and punch a couple of small holes. Fill the rest of the aquarium with the materials that normally go in a landfill.

Examine what's in the landfill and identify all the things that could be composted or disposed of in another way.

Add a little water (rainfall) and see how that affects the landfill.

Worm composting

"All the fertile areas of this planet have at least once passed through
the bodies of earthworms." - Charles Darwin

Two great resources to get your worm farm going are:

WORMS EAT MY GARBAGE
A wonderful starter book for learning about worms, creating your own worm compost bin, and harvesting worm compost for garden use. Emphasizes ways to recycle many common materials.

WORMS EAT OUR GARBAGE: Classroom Activities for a Better Environment, by Mary Appelhof. Study and appreciate worms - their habitat, needs, physiology, relationships to other living things and more. Integrates earthworm activities with soil science, plant growth studies and ecology issues. Activities in science, math, art, language arts and more with reproducible charts. How worms move, breathe, eat, sense reproduce, etc. 214 pages.

Organic gardens, start with good dirt

Use the worm castings from your worm project to create an organic garden. Organic gardens are ones in which no manmade fertilizers or pesticides are used. In order to start an organic garden, your club needs to identify a space it can use. Have the soil tested by your state's agricultural extension office or farm bureau. If the soil for your proposed garden is polluted work with your local authorities towards remediation or consider a flower garden. If it's okay, start planning your garden. Look to your local garden or horticulture club for advice on natural remedies to pests and disease.

Wetlands curriculum YMCA/USGS

The YMCA maintains a partnership with the United States Geological survey. Under this partnership the YMCA and the USGS are developing educational curriculum addressing several environmental issues. For more information, write to:

The Frost Valley YMCA
2000 Frost Valley Rd
Claryville, NY 12725

YMCA Resources

YESC Resources: National and Regional
YMCA Camps and Environmental Education Centers

Related Programs

Center for Environmental Education
E2
Earth Jam Concerts
Global Rivers Environmental Education Network
Green Teacher
National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
Northeast Field Guide to Environmental Education

On-Line assistance

www.mightymedia.com
www.igc.org/igc/ecoNet
www.princeton.edu/~rcurtis/nee.html
www.audubon.org/audubon/aei.html
www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu
www.trips.com/nsee
www.epa.gov

Planning Service-Learning Projects

Desired Outcomes
As a result of participating in Earth Service Corps young people will:
1) be involved in planning projects from beginning to end;
2) develop organizational skills by leading positive service-learning projects;
3) understand the project planning process;
4) accomplish environmental action projects as a group;
5) be able to create projects which address community environmental problems;
6) work with members of the community on projects.

Service-Learning is the cornerstone of the YMCA Earth Service Corps program. Selecting, planning, and carrying out service-learning projects is a big part of what defines the Earth Service Corps experience. This section will identify steps and processes which lead to meaningful service experiences and community action projects.

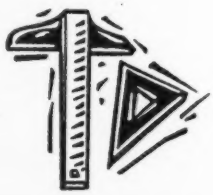
The process is the most important thing to keep in mind. Following a basic project planning and service-learning process will ensure that learning takes place. Chances for success are greatly improved with a little bit of early thinking, planning, and on-going reflection and evaluation. Action projects are designed to do more than simply achieve results. Student application of environmental awareness and leadership skills in an empowering planning experience is more important that the project itself.

It is also important to remind everyone that through service-learning, young people are contributors to their community. Earth Service Corps emphasizes the value of student leadership. Students take on the hands-on planning of projects. YMCA staff, teachers, and other volunteers offer support, guidance, reality-checks, and resources to students engaged in planning and carrying out a service-learning project. These adult leaders help provide facilitation and the content of the group evaluation/reflection to help ensure that the learning in service-learning is taking place.

Selecting, planning, and carrying out service-learning projects translates student leadership and environmental education into meaningful action. This is truly learning by doing and empowering young people to take that important step to identify and address real community needs.

This section includes:

- ✓The CRAWL, WALK, RUN approach to Project Planning
- ✓Examples of CRAWL, WALK, RUN projects
- ✓Brainstorming 101 - How to Generate Project Ideas
- ✓The Five Step Project Planning Process
- ✓A Five Step Project Planning Worksheet



The Crawl, Walk, Run Approach to Project Planning

YMCA Earth Service Corps promotes the concept of "CRAWL, WALK, and RUN" projects. The idea is to start simple, build upon your successes, and to pace your group with a variety of different types of projects. CRAWL projects are great at the start of the school year and are also fun to do throughout the year. WALK projects and RUN projects involve more planning and coordination and should be done when your group is ready for a bigger challenge or a longer-term project.

It's important to keep in mind that the idea behind CRAWL, WALK, and RUN is not to keep developing bigger and more complex projects and trying to outdo every project. The CRAWL, WALK, RUN approach will help you in your project selection and will help you identify projects which will meet the needs and interests of your group.

CRAWL

Crawl projects are projects which can be done quickly and easily and which show immediate results. These types of projects can be done in one day and require some pre-planning and organization, but not much. Basically, people should be able to show-up and participate in a crawl project really easily and be able to contribute. Crawl projects are excellent motivators and are a great way to recruit new members. Crawl projects should be FUN and should really make folks feel like they've made a difference. The most common type of crawl project is the clean up, of a park, school grounds, a beach, etc. Clean ups can involve a large group of people and definitely leave a visible impact on an area.

WALK

Walk projects are more complex, but still have clear, visible outcomes. Walk projects might take a few days to actually complete and require more leadership, planning, and evaluation skills. These types of projects tend to require more involvement on the part of a group or club and require that a larger number of students take on leadership roles. Examples of successful walk projects include: organizing an environmental education presentation for an elementary school, planning a school-wide recycling drive and competition, or planning a storm drain stenciling project.

RUN

Starting a school recycling program, planning a urban tree planting, monitoring a watershed, or producing environmental booklets are RUN projects. These involve a great deal of organization, follow-up and built-in evaluations along the way so that people can see progress. Run projects might take weeks to organize and often-times involve a long-term commitment like running a school's recycling program. It's important to remember that run projects will take a lot of a group's energy, time, and resources. The outcome you are trying to reach is important, but remember to focus on the process - how well are you working together as a group, does everyone have a role and a way to contribute, is the goal clear??? These are the types of questions you'll need to ask yourselves as you take on a run project.

Examples of CRAWL, WALK, RUN projects

IN THE CRAWL CATEGORY WE HAVE...

- Student organized a trash and garbage clean up of Morgan Cave, Kentucky.
- Students pulled three tons of trash out of a local park for Earth Day '93 in Dayton, Ohio.
- In Kokomo, Indiana canoe clean ups of Wildcat Creek took place in collaboration with other community groups.
- In Dayton, Ohio students built pens for pups at a red wolf breeding facility.
- In Boise, Idaho students repaired trails and planted trees, sagebrush, and other native vegetation.

ON TO THE WORLD OF WALK PROJECTS...

- In Seattle, students teamed up with a county program to build worm bins (for food stuff composting) for home and school use.
- Antioch High School students in Nashville organized a community-wide phone book recycling effort.
- In Everett, Washington students have adopted two local elementary schools, teaching the younger students about the environment through art projects and skits.
- Nashville, Tennessee students painted environmental murals at 12 high schools for Earth Day.
- In St. Paul, Minnesota students planted wildflowers along local trails and spent a day working at a day camp for children on a nearby Lakota reservation.
- New York City teens collected clothing, food, and toiletries for their local community homeless shelter.
- In Boston, teens completed a mural project for the lobby of the Fenway Community Center.

AND THEY'RE OFF - RUN PROJECTS GALORE...

- In Kokomo, Indiana student-initiated recycling programs have begun at five local businesses.
- Students from Camp Kern in Ohio worked with Project Green to do an on-going water quality monitoring and stewardship of the Little Miami river.
- In Newark, New Jersey students worked with local organizations to turn a vacant lot into a community park complete with raised flower beds, playground equipment, and a grassy playing field.
- Teens in the Mission Hill section of Boston have created a touring environmental theater group.

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Brainstorming 101

Brainstorming is a technique that will help you and your club generate project ideas. It's fun, easy to do, and can be done just about anywhere. When you are brainstorming, all ideas are considered good ideas and everyone has a right (and a responsibility) to participate. Use all your creativity and any idea that comes to brain should be written down, even if it's completely bizarre and out there. So, in order to brainstorm as a group, here's what you'll need...

Step 1: Find a chalkboard, chart pad or other such item where you can list out everyone's ideas.

Step 2: Select a facilitator for the brainstorming session. The facilitator needs to be able to hear everyone's ideas, keep the group focused, and make sure that all the ideas are written down and understood. Either the facilitator can do the writing down of the ideas or a separate person can be selected to be Vanna White. As Vanna, this person's job will be to write down all the ideas presented in a neat and organized fashion. Someone with a strong sense of style and the ability to choose nice marker colors would make an appropriate Vanna.

Step 3: A shared understanding in the group about how brainstorming works. Namely, that everyone's ideas are important, that there are no wrong or right ideas when brainstorming, and to listen to the person speaking and to the idea they are sharing. Withhold judgment! Have fun! And be focused. This should be a list you can refer back to you for lots of project ideas.

Step 4: Begin Brainstorming Now. Start throwing out those project ideas. The facilitator needs to make sure everyone is following the ground rules of brainstorming and make sure that Vanna has enough time to write everything down.

Okay, so now you've accomplished the big 4 steps of the brainstorming process. Now what? Good question. Here's the thing... After you've done all this great brainstorming, you'll still need to prioritize your list and select a project. This is when the group facilitator will REALLY start to earn their keep. Let the next steps lead you to a great, super fantabulous service project...

Step 5: Go through your project brainstorm list. As a group, decide on a process to select your next project. What do you want to do to try to reach consensus as group about which project to do? Sometimes voting can help you begin to narrow things out, but mostly try to focus the conversation around people's interests, what seems most do-able, and what best reflects the results of your needs assessment or group concerns.

Step 6: Identify the top three project ideas. What about these project ideas does the group like? Looking back on the crawl, walk, run section. Can you identify as a group what category each idea falls under? Remember, it's not like you can't do everything on your list. You need to prioritize and choose. If your group is most interested in a crawl or walk project, select the project that seems most do-able right now. IF you're ready for the challenge of a run project, then go for it!

Step 7: Select a project!!! You've explored the world of crawl, walk, run projects and now you've graduated from Brainstorming 101. You are ready to engage in the FIVE STEP PLANNING process.

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The Five Step Project Planning Process

This five step process is intended to help you and your group think about, plan, and carry out successful environmental action projects. As you go about planning a project, review these five steps to help you organize and coordinate your efforts. You can also look back on these steps later after you've completed your project and use them as a way to evaluate what you accomplished. A worksheet has been drafted to help you plan out a project using these five steps. You might find it helpful as you plan your first few projects. **And the five steps are...**

I. **Assess Needs**

- **Complete a needs assessment of your school, neighborhood, or community**
- Brainstorm possible project ideas based on what you've found
- Identify a project based on your interest level, need, and opportunity (keeping in mind the crawl, walk, run concept)

II. **Objective/Goal Setting**

- What will we be learning?
- What are our specific goals?
- How will we know if we're successful?
- What are our expectations of the project and how will we work as a group?

III. **Design the Project**

- Brainstorm specifics for the project
- Critique/choose
- Prioritize
- Examine resources you have available or need to secure
- Get needed materials
- Create a project timeline
  - Select day, place, and time (all logistics)
  - Determine who will do what by when

IV. **Implement the Project**

- Delegate responsibilities/create roles for group members during the project
- Create a communication link among the group (i.e., a central coordinator or a phone tree, etc.)

DO THE PROJECT!

V. **Evaluation and Reflection of the Project**

- Did we accomplish our goals?
- How did we work together as a group?
- What worked well with the project, what didn't, what might we do better next time...
  - What did we learn?

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Project Planning Worksheet

Before you begin this process, make sure you have done a needs assessment and have already as a group brainstormed different project ideas. This worksheet is intended to help you plan our your project. You will need to have a specific project in mind before you start.

Step 1: Identify a Project. Review the section on CRAWL, WALK, RUN PROJECTS.

Describe your project idea in a nutshell: (Is it a crawl, walk, or run?)

_____

_____

_____

Step 2: Objective/Goal Setting.

What are your goals for this project? What do you hope to accomplish?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What will you be learning:

_____

_____

_____

Step 3: Design the Project.

When will this project be taking place?

_____

What materials will you need?

_____

Create a project timeline.

Step 4: DO THE PROJECT!!!

Step 5: Evaluate the Project.

Did you meet your project goals? _____

What went well? _____

What will do you differently next time? _____

COMMUNITY/ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MAPPING

In this section, a process is outlined by which you and your group can plan and carry out an effective needs assessment through resource mapping. Through resource mapping your club will be able to identify real community and environmental needs, problems, issues, and the tools to address them effectively. It's not just about what's missing, **It's about what's already there!** Community Resource Mapping will help you identify possible project ideas AND most importantly, will help you make sure that you're doing a project that is actually needed by your community. Let's get more specific...

What is Resource Mapping?

- Resource Mapping is a tool to help you understand your community better. It is also a project planning tool that helps your club better understand the resources available to achieve its goals.
- Resource Mapping can include interviewing folks, videotaping the area you're looking at, taking photographs, creating neighborhood maps, and other creative data collecting ideas.
- A Resource Map will help you look at your community with fresh eyes and a new found pride.

Why do a Resource Map?

- It's a fun and effective way to collect information about your school, neighborhood, and community.
- It's a way to find out what your community *really* needs and how you can make the biggest difference.
- It's a tool to help you come up with project ideas throughout the year.
- And finally, it's a way to get to know your community and discover all the wonderful things already there.

It's important to keep in mind that doing such an assessments is tied to both service-learning and the project planning process. Refer to these sections to help you get more specific on how to take the results of your resource map and turn it into a terrific service-learning project.

As you look into the next piece which will outline the process of carrying out an effective assessment, keep in mind that the process is one which requires lots of creativity, thinking, and reflection. The questions outlined are geared towards helping you and your school club generate tools to gather information. Add additional questions where needed, take out those that seem to not be useful for your group, and be creative!!

How to map your communities resources

The Basic Steps...

Step 1: Brainstorm!

- As a group, talk about and brainstorm the places and things that everyone in your club shares. Which of these do you care about most? How can you have the strongest positive impact on these?
- As a group list and talk about all of the different sites you could take a closer look at.
- Keep in mind that a site can be as BIG or as small as you'd like. For example, you could map your whole school, a section of a neighborhood, an abandoned lot, a park or playground, etc.

Step 2: Decide.

- Choose a site.
- Keep track of your original brainstorm list so you can go back to it later to find more ideas.

Step 3: Creativity Blast

- Once you've selected your site, you'll need to start collecting information as a group. There are lots of ways you can collect this information. You can interview some key folks in the area. You could take photos to document what you see. Videotaping is a great way to document both the interviews AND what you see. This is a time to be creative!!!!
- As a group, brainstorm and discuss all the ways you might be able to collect the information you need.
- You can create committees or teams to take on different jobs and you can bring it all back together to the large group. A piece of advice - the more people involved in collecting information, the better. Everyone sees things differently. You needs lots of input and perspectives.

Step 4: What is it I'm Collecting Again?

- A data collection form has been created to help you collect the sort of information that might be useful to you. The form is located at the end of this section. Feel free to add questions or to not use some of these. These questions are in no particular order. They can be used to interview folks or to collect your own observations.

Step 5: Collect and Sort

- Once you've collected all of this tremendous information, you will need to get together as a large group and share all that you've found.
- Keep track of all of your information - organize it - sort through it - find common themes.
- Look to see what the most common themes are.

Step 6: Decide on project - What can do you to make this a better place?

- From your bunches of information, brainstorm as a group at least 5 possible project ideas.
- If you have lots of ideas, you'll just have that many more projects you could do down the road!
- From this project brainstorm list, PICK ONE you can do right now as a group. If the project you select requires lots of tasks, do the subcommittee thing again. Delegate. Share responsibility. Involve everyone in your club.

Step 7: Look at the Project Planning Section

- Now that you've completed mapping your resources, you are ready to move on to the world of project planning. Go forth and serve!

Initial Questions:

Key questions to consider before mapping your resources:

1. **Describe IN DETAIL the area or site you are assessing.**
   Where is the area/site located? What does it look like? What kind of shape is it in?

2. **Who and what lives in the area? Who uses, relies on, or is impacted by the area?**

3. **What are the strengths of the area or place?**

4. **What makes it a healthy place?**

5. **What makes it an unhealthy place?**

6. **What resources already exist in the area?**

7. **Who might be potential allies and partners to help you design a project?**

8. **What's the history of the area or place? Has it always looked the same? How has it changed and why has it changed?**

9. **Put yourself in someone else's shoes... As a parent, a teacher, a business person or community member, what do you see when you look at this place?**

10. **What would you define as a community needs vs. an environmental need for this place? Why? Are the needs related in any way or share anything in common?**

COMMUNITY RESOURCE MAPPING

Your community resources can be divided into four categories: physical, institutional, organizational, and individual. Each of these categories can describe a range of options. Once you've decided what the physical boundaries of your target area are, you can begin to "draw" your map of your community resources.

Helpful tools will be:

a map of the area
local newspapers
local library/librarian
friends
neighbors
relatives
club advisor
phone book
the Internet
school principal
Y staff

Important questions to ask during your research are:

What do you or your organization do?
How do you impact ... (whatever issues your club has decided to address)?
Do you have any ideas of what our club can do to have a positive impact on this issue?

Using these resources, "draw" a map of your community listing all the resources.

Individual	Organizational	Institutional	Physical

Cross-Cultural Awareness

Desired Outcomes

As a result of participating in YMCA Earth Service Corps, teens will:

- learn about environmental issues in a broad context;
- learn about how different cultures and countries approach environmental issues;
- accept responsibility for being educated global citizens;
- learn how to develop partnerships in a cross-cultural context;
- share the YESC program model with other communities and countries.

Since the environmental problems facing our world are international, solutions will be found only if we learn to work in a respectful, effective way with people from other nations and cultures. Through environmental symposia, global cultures day and cross-cultural exchanges, Earth Service Corps helps young people develop an understanding of how their actions can harm - or benefit - their community and their world. Our goal is to help young people appreciate the biological "common ground" we share as a species while still enjoying the rich diversity of our cultures, religions and traditions.

> The YESC definition of a global citizen is someone who is sensitive to and curious about the values and world views of other cultures, who considers the far-reaching effects of his/her actions, and who is willing to share information to reach a common goal. This chapter focuses on the specifics of deepening the cross cultural experience and learning in your Earth Service Corps club.

Why is Cross-cultural Awareness Important?

Any person in the United States, by just sitting at home, is in touch with a number of other countries of the world: the television from Japan, the shirt from Hong Kong, the coffee from Latin America, the cocoa from Africa, etc. If this person were to get rid of every object in the house with contents from outside of the United Stated, what would be left?

Today, to be a United States citizen is also to be a citizen of the world. More and more, Americans are realizing the inter-dependence of countries and peoples. We recognize that there are no boundaries to environmental problems, only varying levels of impact.

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Cross-Cultural Activities

Fair Trade Banquet (Lunch)

Purpose: To become more aware of some elements of international trading and how nations depend on each other for exports of food.

For a trail lunch or a picnic, the automatic thing to do is to evenly divide the food. After the group has developed some cohesion, it would be worthwhile to try something a little different.

Directions:
Give each person a single item of the lunch. (For example, peanut butter or crackers.) Explain to the group that they must trade among themselves to create a balanced meal for themselves. Also tell them that they cannot begin to eat until they have a balanced meal.

1. After trading is underway, the counselor announces that there is a surplus wheat crop (therefore the crackers are worth comparatively little) and that now the counselor is in a position to give crackers or bread away to everyone.

2. A little later, announce that one of the group members has consistently violated human rights in his country and consequently everyone else should boycott his product. Trading would then continue.

3. Before everyone starts getting really hungry, stop the trading. The first step in debriefing would be to see how everyone did in the trading. Afterwards, ask what the fairest arrangement would have been. The food should then be redistributed so that everyone has a balanced meal.

DISCUSSION

- What parts of this exercise were realistic? Unrealistic?
- Did anyone have a very Popular item? Can you think of an example in the real world? E.g. oil. How has this Popularity affected countries that Produce that resource?
- Did anyone have an unpopular item? Can You think of an example in the real world? How has this unpopularity affected countries that produce it?
- What was the effect of the surplus of wheat on whoever was holding the crackers/bread? How do countries Protect themselves from a situation like that?
- Did everyone participate in the boycott? What was its effect,? What country are some governments trying to boycott right now? Why? What are the effects? Are there alternatives to boycotts?
- What would be an ideal world trading system?

"Real Life" Discussion Ideas

Directions: Have the whole group sit down together. Explain that although in our own personal situations we can encourage cooperation and trust as a way of life, we cannot pretend it is easy to see ways to resolve many conflicts in the world. Ask four people to read out the Real Life examples of conflict situations, while the others quietly listen. Encourage people to imagine themselves in the situations and to notice how they react and feel during the readings.

SOUTH AFRICA: Education for Blacks in South Africa is designed to equip them for the most mundane, dirty and badly paid jobs. On June 16th 1976, school children in the black township of Soweto refused to attend classes, objecting to being taught in the Afrikaans language, one of the languages of the white minority. The protest spread to other townships. The Government responded brutally with tear gas and bullets. About 1 00 children were killed and thousands maimed. June 16th is commemorated each year as Soweto Day. The oppression, torture and violence continue today.

NICARAGUA: Anna faced an agonizing choice. Nicaragua was in the grip of the cruel and corrupt Somoza dictatorship; any opposition was violently repressed. Exploitation and poverty were tearing apart the people. Atrocities were committed daily by the National Guard. It was hard to see any alternative to revolution if justice was to be restored. As a Christian, Anna had been committed to non-violence. But as the community she worked with was terrorized and tortured she felt she had no choice. One more maimed body of a teenage boy was the final straw. Anna joined the revolutionary Sandinistas as supporter, messenger and gun-runner.

NORTHERN IRELAND: "You're not the first person to come to Northern Ireland to try to understand the situation, and you won't be the last. Anyone who thinks they understand it is kidding themselves," said Joe. Most people want peace, but there's a powerful minority who stir up hate and perpetuate violence. The bitterness is deeply rooted and goes back centuries. But the "troubles" have polarized things. Communities don't forget easily when so many people have been threatened, attacked or killed. Catholic and Protestant teens are brought up separately so they don't learn to trust and understand each other. Some think there'll be no progress until the British Army moves out. Others are terrified of what will happen if they do.

LONDON: "My son Ian is fifteen. He has no hope of a job. He went to the wrong school. We live in the wrong area. Our faces are the wrong color," , says Sheila. "There's little for Ian and his mates to do in the evenings. He's a good lad and doesn't make trouble. But when a group of them were hanging around on the pavement beside parked cars the police ran them in for attempted car theft. I'm sitting here worried sick about where he is and the first I know is a phone call at midnight. I have to walk three miles to the police station to get him out. Is it surprising there's riots in Britain? I don't say they are night. But when young black people growing up hating the police who harass them, in a society that doesn't care about their needs, can you really expect them to just-sit quiet and do nothing?"

From: Y Care International, CreActivity. London: 1968.

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What Else Can I Do?!

Most people think that one person can't do much to change the way the world is.
But... one person **can** become involved and one person **can** make a difference!

One person can...
CHANGE SOME ASPECTS OF THEIR OWN LIFESTYLE

we can look at our way of life to see how it relates to the saying:
"Live simply, that others may simply live"

take a good look at what you as an individual consume
Do you need it?
Does it use up valuable resources?

- how do you travel? (Foot, bike, and bus are all easier on the environment than cars.).
- what do you do with your garbage? Join the many communities who are beginning to see the environmental benefits of recycling.

Changing our lifestyle is the minimum that each of us can do.

One Person can ..
KEEP INFORMED AND HELP TO EDUCATE OTHERS ABOUT DEVELOPING WORLD CONCERNS

- arrange to share information through Programs at your school, church, workplace, or any other organization
- Put up displays on environmental issues, hunger, militarization, etc.
- hold a, Rich/Poor meal and combine with a film or a panel discussion on world hunger
- Remember: The more people there are who know about developing world issues, the more people there will be to become involved

One Person can...
SUPPORT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- organize dances, walkathons, auctions, and garage sales to help raise money
- becoming directly involved gives young people a valuable sense of conviction and a channel for their energy

One Person can..
VOLUNTEER IN DEVELOPMENT BY SPONSORING:

- an international conference/assembly/festival
- an International dance festival
- a Cultural Awareness week
- a fundraiser for a foreign Y
- a partnership with a foreign Y
- Pen Pals
- Program exchange

International Exchange

International exchange is a critical element that sets YMCA Earth Service Corps apart from other environmental clubs. Whereas everyone is admonished to 'Think globally; act locally", YESC participants accept the responsibility of acting globally as well. Working with the Y, teachers and the greater community, they become educated about global issues, earn travel funds, speak articulately and act responsibly abroad.

The goals of international travel are to:

1. strengthen commitment to environmental issues;
2. dramatically improve leadership skills;
3. encourage clarity of thinking;
4. expand understanding of basic issues of environment and development;
5. help teens see problems at home in a different light.

At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Earth Service Corps teens met with U.S. Senators and Congressmen and other world leaders. They were interviewed extensively on CNN and National Public Radio. They returned determined to share their education and sensitivity with their entire community.

In Rio, teens consistently voiced the message of education, working together and identifying crucial environmental problems outside of the context of politics. As a result of our efforts, the YMCA Earth Service program is being started in Rio, Belo Horizonte and Porto Trombetas in the Amazon. City officials from Sabara were so impressed with this group of teens that they donated land so a YMCA could be built in Sabara. They also invited a student to return in the summer of 1993 to assist in research at their biological reserve.

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Evaluating Your Club

Use this checklist to help you evaluate how your club is doing. Involve your club in going through the list and assessing whether or not each of these elements is in place and if it's strongly present, somewhat present, or absent. Identify ways you can make sure that each of these is in place and in good shape.

☑The club meets regularly (no less than twice a month);

☑The location and time of the meeting is clear to all of the members and stays consistent;

☑There is an adult advisor who is a consistent member of the group and who is supportive of teen leadership;

☑YMCA staff offer support, resources, and leadership;

☑Everyone in the group has a role and has a way to contribute;

☑There is a clear and defined leadership structure and leadership is viewed as a shared responsibility of members;

☑Members have a clear sense of the purpose and goals of the group;

☑The group can make decisions efficiently and is often able to reach consensus among members;

☑Group members feel safe, respected, and valued;

☑The club is about service-learning :

- ✓ identifying real environmental needs by carrying out community environmental needs assessments;
- ✓ projects are planned and completed which address these needs;
- ✓ there is structured time to reflect and evaluate;

☑The club is FUN.

Marks of an Effective Group

By reviewing the marks of an effective group, you will gain insight into how a successful club operates. It is rare that a newly formed group displays all of these characteristics. However, it is the responsibility of the leadership to move the group in that direction.

1. Members possess a clear sense of the purpose and goals of the group.
2. There is a consistent routine but there's also room for flexibility.
3. Leadership is viewed as a shared responsibility among members.
4. The group sets aside time to carry out and evaluate its activities and review how the group has worked together.
5. The group can make decisions efficiently and is frequently able to reach consensus among members.
6. The group makes good use of the skills, interests, and of all its members.
7. A balance exists between meeting individual needs and group goals.
8. Members demonstrate a high degree of commitment to the group.
9. A high level of trust among members encourages open communication.
10. The group is not dominated by its official leaders or by any member or group of members.

Dealing With an Ineffective Club

When one or more of the marks of an effective group are absent, your club is not functioning as effectively as it could be. You should consider one or more of the following methods for getting club members to acknowledge the problem, consider options for solving it, and agree on what steps they will take to solve it. Club members need to learn to accept responsibility for solving their own problems. Read through these suggested tips to help you work it out...

- ***Observers.*** Select a small number of club members to observe the interaction at a club meeting while not participating themselves and providing feedback to the club.
- ***Problem clinic.*** When a particular problem is clearly defined, divide club members into small groups to brainstorm methods of solving it.
- ***Visitations.*** Visual observations can be most effective. With your club officers, visit a club that functions effectively and then discuss why it is effective. Another option is to visit a club that has a similar problem and discuss why things couldn't get done.
- ***Case study.*** Present a case similar to the club's problem by reading it to the club. Let the club discuss the solutions as an entire group or as smaller groups that report back.
- ***Panel discussions.*** Let club members formulate questions for a panel. Invite a few members and their advisor from another club to serve as the panel members.
- ***Training.*** Ask the Y director (or other resource person) to present a training session on the club's specific problem (e.g., communication skills).

Evaluating This Handbook

In order to help us provide you with the materials and resources which will best support you and your club, we need your feedback! Please let us know what you think of this handbook and offer us any suggestions you have to make it better. Feel free to complete this short evaluation on your own or with your group. Thanks!

1. Is this handbook useful helpful for you and your club? Circle One:
   Yes Not Really It has potential

   Please explain:

2. What have you found to be useful and helpful?

3. What have you not found to be of use to you or your club? Basically, what do you need more of and what would you like to see less of?

4. What do you think about how this handbook is organized and presented?

5. What are your suggestions on how we can improve on organization and presentation?

Name of person completing this evaluation: _____
Role (i.e., teen leader, advisor, Y staff, etc.): _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____

Please return this evaluation to: **YMCA Earth Service Corps National Resource Center**
909 Fourth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

APPENDIX

Parent Information

Communication With Parents

Good communication with the parents of club members, is essential for operating an effective program throughout the year. Some may assume that as teens grow older, parents need to know less or are less interested in information about their child's activities. But strengthening the family is part of the YMCA's mission, and we should make every attempt to involve parents in their teen's YESC club experience. Club advisors should communicate with parents in several ways: through printed information, and conversations or meetings with parents.

Printed Information

Keep parents informed about their teen's activities in YESC. A parent newsletter is a great way to keep parents informed about events, deadlines for activities, and other club matters. It can also be used to offer parenting tips and advise parents of community sources of help. It can give recognition to clubs and club members for completion of projects or other achievements. (Take every opportunity to share "the good news" about today's teenagers.) Three or four issues a year is sufficient.

A small handbook may also be a very effective tool to give parents so that they can understand what the club/program is all about. The handbook can also highlight expectations for club members and ways in which a parent might become involved in the club operations/activities. This handbook may be accompanied by a letter from the club advisor discussing the merits of the program and it's benefits to their teen.

Conversations or Meetings With Parents

If you notice a personality change in or unusual behavior from a club member, call the parents and ask if you can set up a time to speak with them about the son or daughter's participation in the club. Do not assume they have time for the discussion at that moment. Some parents will want to talk immediately; others will suggest a later time. Some will request (or you may suggest) a meeting with, or perhaps without, their teen.

If you are on a trip with the club and you have to call parents because of an issue with their child, remember this tip: If parents aren't in and you leave a message, specify what the reason for the call is (discuss issue briefly) and that it is not an injury-related emergency . By remembering this, you can spare parents a great deal of anxiety that way.

Parents as Resources

Parents need not be considered "outsiders looking in" when it comes to your YESC. Parents can throw themselves into fully into all of your program endeavors. Parents can:

- Become volunteer advisors
- Provide expertise in particular areas of interest to the club
- Provide networking opportunities with other community organization
- Provide financial support
- Secure materials and other resources vital to the club
- Transportation to project sites

The list could go on. Your club is only as strong as it members. Tap into the energy and the interest your parents will have once they become familiar with their teens involvement in the YESC program. Parents will then become a vital member to your club.

Parent Information Sheets

Parents may need help dealing with their teens, and may not know exactly where to turn. You can provide some of the resource to the parents and refer them to others that they may desire. The following sheets will give parents and opportunity to consider their teen and their understanding of each other. Barriers to communication are the leading cause of conflicts between parents and teens.

If parents can remember what it was like to be a teen, and if their teen can put themselves in their parents place, new understandings may occur and foster a stronger bound between parent and teen. The activities may be of assistance.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

YMCA PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

Communicating With Your Teen

This is a test to measure how well you and your teen communicate. Try to answer each of these questions *as you think your teen would.*

1. Who is my favorite singer or musical group?_____
2. What TV shows do I watch every week?_____
3. What's my favorite movie?_____
4. What's my favorite meal?_____
5. How tall am I now?_____
6. Who are two good friends of mine?_____
7. What class do I really like?_____
8. What class do I really hate?_____
9. What after-school activities am I involved in?_____
10. Who are my heroes/heroines?_____
11. What was my last homework assignment?_____
12. If I had extra money, what would I buy?_____
13. When did I last go out, and with whom?_____
14. What is my biggest worry?_____
15. What are my plans for the future?_____
16. If I had free time, what would I do?_____

After you've filled it out, have your teen take one too. Compare your answers to see how well you communicate. You may learn some new things about each other!

*From "How Do I Communicate With My Teen?", 1990, *Work* and Family Life, March 1990, p. 5. **Copyright** 1990 by *Work and Family Life.* Adapted by permission. Based on material from *Teen Stress* by Cheryl L. Hanson.

YMCA PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

Keeping Communication Open Between You and Your Teenager*

Children should become more independent as they grow older, and it's normal for teenagers to share the details of their lives with their friends, not their parents. But the teenage years are a time when teens make some critical choices; they need your help and guidance. They need to feel that they can trust you with information. Parents need to do whatever they can to keep the lines of communication open. Here are some suggestions that other parents have found helpful:

- Be a good listener. Pay attention when your son or daughter tries to tell you about something even if it doesn't seem particularly important or interesting at the time.
- Don't be too judgmental when your son or daughter tells you about things "teens are doing" that you don't approve of.
- Use I messages to communicate your feelings: "I feel there's another side to this issue."
- Don't take your frustrations out on your teens. If you had a bad day at work, don't come home and attack your teen for his or her behavior.
- Be generous in your praise. Look for different ways to tell your teenagers you appreciate them.
- Be willing to talk when your teenager feels like talking-even if you don't.
- Hold family discussions and include your teenager in decision making and problem solving.
- Be willing to compromise sometimes.
- Have a sense of humor.

*From "Keeping Communication open Between You and Your Teenager" by J.M. Perryman, 1990, *Work and Family Life*, March 1990, pp. 1 and 5. Copyright 1990 by *Work and Family Life*. Reprinted by permission.

Sample Letter to Parents

DATE

Dear Parent/Guardian , [try to use parent's name]

Your teen is a vital member of our YESC club. [Teen's name] is involved in the weekly meetings, planning of projects and execution of all of our planned activities. Without [him or her], we probably would have a hard time accomplishing all that we do. [Name of child] is a credit to all teens; when most young adults are very apathetic to the world around them, [He or she] has shown a commitment to making his/her community a better place to be. We are very proud of [him/her].

I wanted to let you know all about the YMCA Earth Service Corps program and your child's involvement.

What distinguishes Earth Service Corps/service-learning is not just the things it tries to accomplish, but the way it accomplishes them:

- We want to develop skilled leaders; Earth Service Corps does this by allowing teens opportunities to expand their leadership experience through service to their communities.
- We want young people to feels valued and empowered; Earth Service Corps does this by supporting our teens partnership with their teachers, community and the YMCA.
- We want teens to learn how to bring people together to solve problems; Earth Service Corps does this by involving teens in experiences where they must work as a group to find solutions to real issues.

Earth Service Corps believes that the best learning comes through *doing*. Experiential learning is learning through direct experience; it engages teens in real, rather that then abstract Experiential learning pervades all that Earth Service Corps does. Earth Service Corps plays a role by providing some of those experiences. By fostering a partnership with teachers and Y staff, we can help ensure that teens have an experiential base for their learning.

Why not stop by one of our meetings. They are held on _____at _____. This would be a great opportunity for you to see exactly what [Name] is working on and to be a part of our YESC family. Thank you for your support of your child and [his/her] efforts in the YMCA Earth Service Corps Program.

Sincerely,

Your Name

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Enriching the Curriculum Through Service-Learning, ed. Carol W. Kinsley and Kate McPherson, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: Alexandria, VA 1995

National Youth Leadership Council and Compass Institute

YMCA of The USA Program Certification Course: Teens Development Through Community Service

YMCA of The USA Program Certification Course: Teen Leadership

YMCA of the USA Program Certification Course: Earth Service Corps Director

Taking The World to Camp, YMCA of Canada, 1989